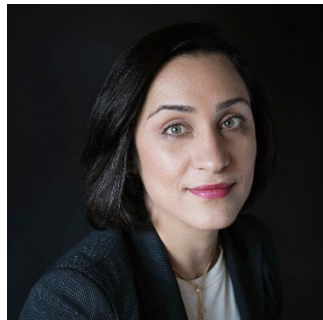# Use Google Analytics to improve your marketing and strategy decisions

by
MARYAM GOLABGIR

I have 18 years of digital marketing expertise in Telecommunication, E-Commerce, IPTV, A.I. Development, Broadband, renewable energy and Financial industries. After spending ten years leading marketing teams for various fortune 500 companies, I decided to start Digital Marketing Experts. This marketing agency caters to small to medium size businesses in the Greater Toronto area. As a female entrepreneur, I have gained a unique perspective on the lives of female business owners. I understand the struggle and have learned how to design, execute and measure marketing strategies and customized campaigns for each business.

I believe it is essential to create a sustainable digital marketing strategy which will require a sharp vision and many metrics to accompany digital plans. Our digital expertise is in Social Media Marketing strategies, Website Development, Search Engine Marketing and Optimization, Online Advertising and Video / Mobile Marketing. For more information about our business, you can visit www.digitalmarketingexperts.ca or my LinkedIn profile https://www.linkedin.com/in/maryamgolabgir

The most need-to-know trends for anyone looking to understand the consumer mindset in the year ahead

Google Analytics

Knowing how to use Google Analytics 4 (GA4) is necessary for marketers looking to optimize their digital campaigns. But first, you need to get some basic considerations nailed down.

When gathering information, journalists ask six classic questions:

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

And you can also use this framework to figure out how to best use GA4 within your organization.

Here's a framework for maximizing Google Analytics 4 to improve your digital marketing strategy.

To make the most of the analytics platform, you must be able to answer at least six of the following seven questions:
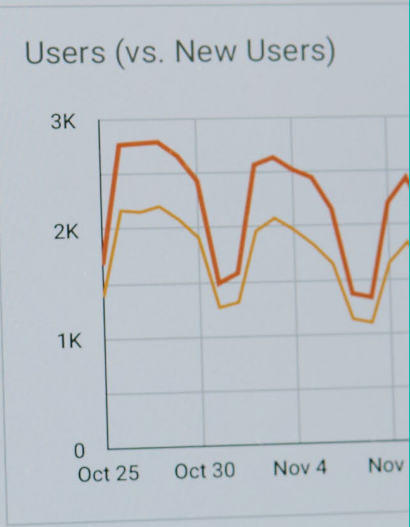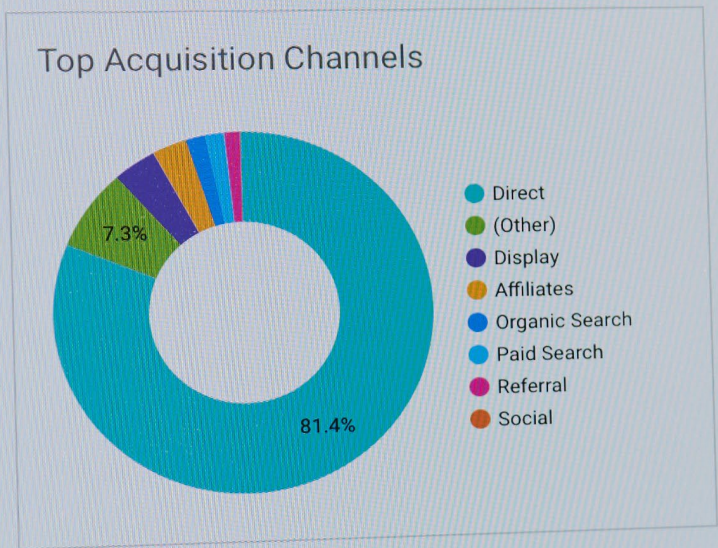
- Who are our company or client's target audiences?
- What events should we set up on our website?
- When should we measure micro conversions?
- Where do we need to customize our reports?
- Why is integrating Google Ads with GA4 the first step?
- How should B2B marketers use GA4?
- How should B2C marketers use GA4?

GOOGLE ANALYTICS

Optimizing Digital Marketing Efforts with GA Reports

With a better understanding of your website traffic, you can now use Google Analytics to optimize your digital marketing strategy. Here are some ways this powerful tool can help:

- **Targeted Advertising:** By analyzing the Acquisition Reports in Google Analytics, you can identify which channels are driving the most traffic to your site. With this information, you can focus your advertising efforts on those channels that have proven to be effective for your business.

- **Improved User Experience:** The Behaviour Reports in Google Analytics can help you identify any usability issues on your website. By fixing these issues, you can improve the overall user experience and increase conversions.

- **Informed Content Strategy:** With Google Analytics, you can track the performance of your website's content. By analyzing which pieces of content are generating the most traffic and conversions, you can create a data-driven content strategy that resonates with your audience.
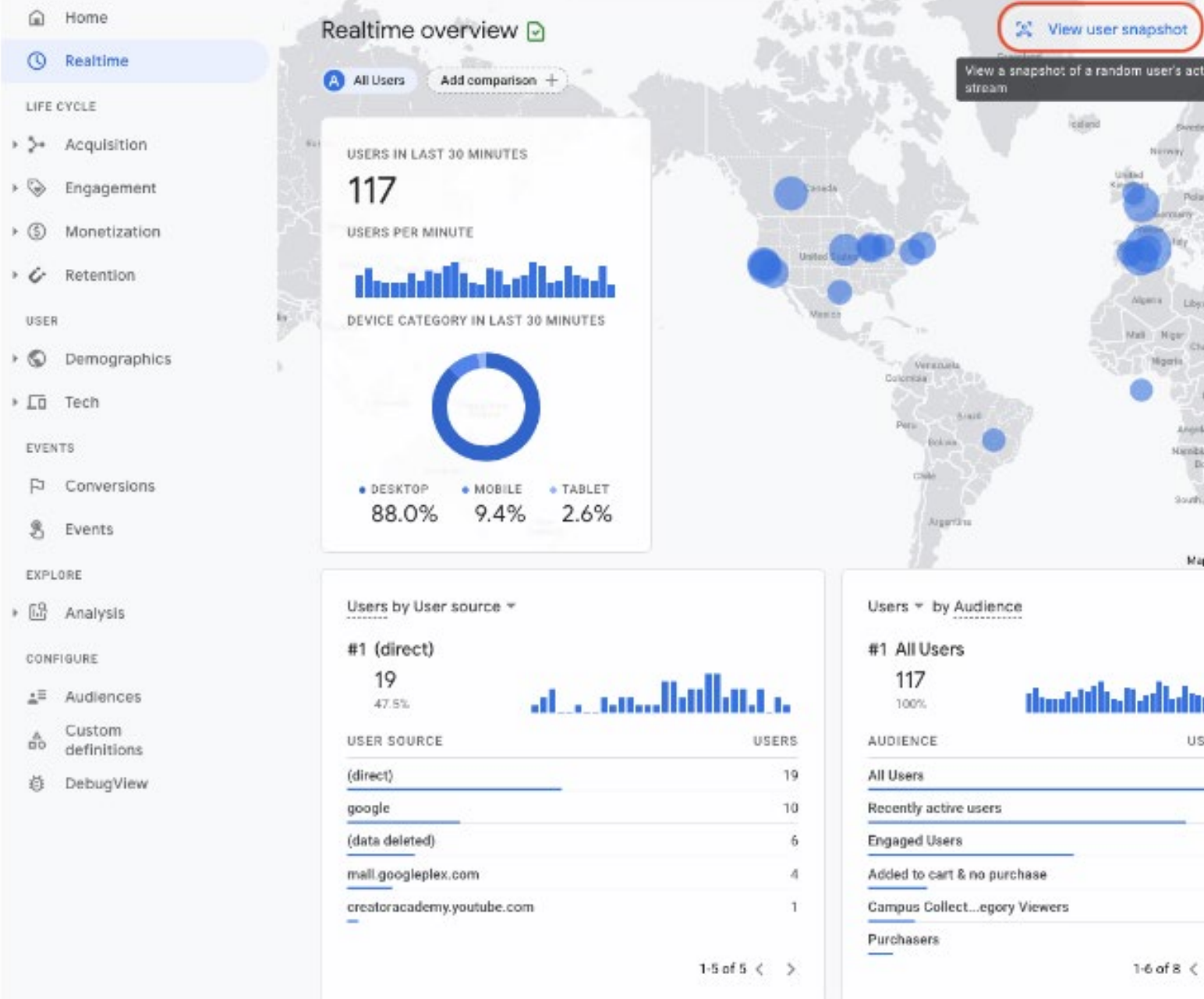
View User Snapshot

Click *View user snapshot* in the top right corner of the Realtime report to see a literal snapshot for a single user.

This includes information about the user's device, location, and real-time engagement with the site/app through events triggered.
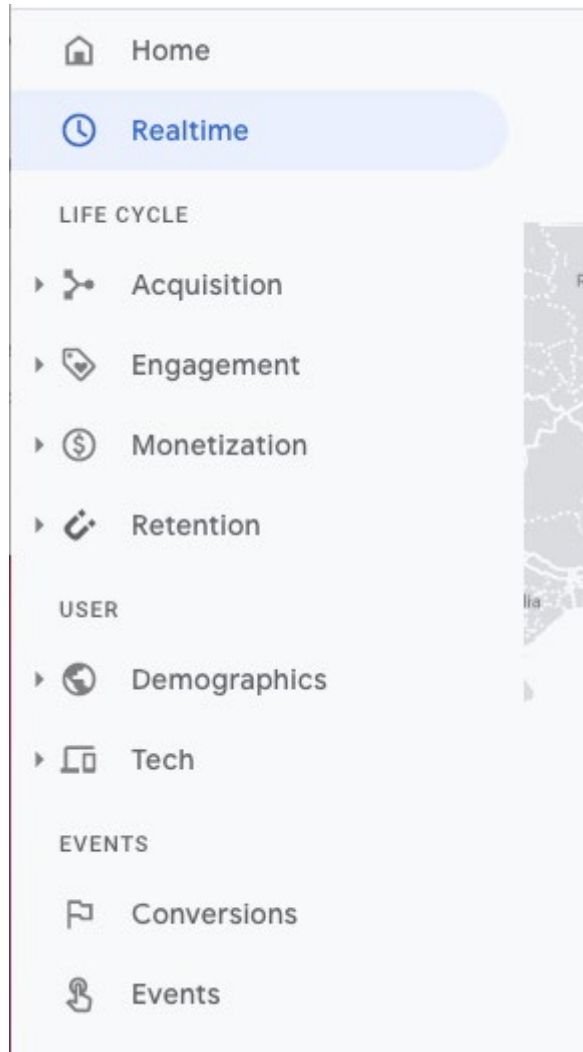
Life Cycle Reporting

Life Cycle reporting mirrors the funnel of acquiring, engaging, monetizing, and retaining users.

It's ideal for analyzing how users enter the conversion funnel and how they behave once they're in the funnel.

Life Cycle Reports will quickly answer:
- How do users enter the conversion funnel?
- How do users behave once they're in the funnel?

GA4 also includes user reports on demographics and technology, as well as events and conversions.

How much demographic information is available on Google Analytics 4?

- **Age**
- **Gender**
- **Location**
- **Language**
- **Interests**

  - **Affinity categories** – People who are labelled as part of a collective. For example, people who like to travel, play sports, or use their smartphones a lot.

  - **In-market segments** – People who are actively in-market to buy something at the moment. Perhaps someone looking to purchase a holiday, a new bicycle, or to move home.

  - **Other categories** – This is a more in-depth look at affinity categories, highlighting people who might fly a lot, play a lot of video games, or people who like gardening etc.
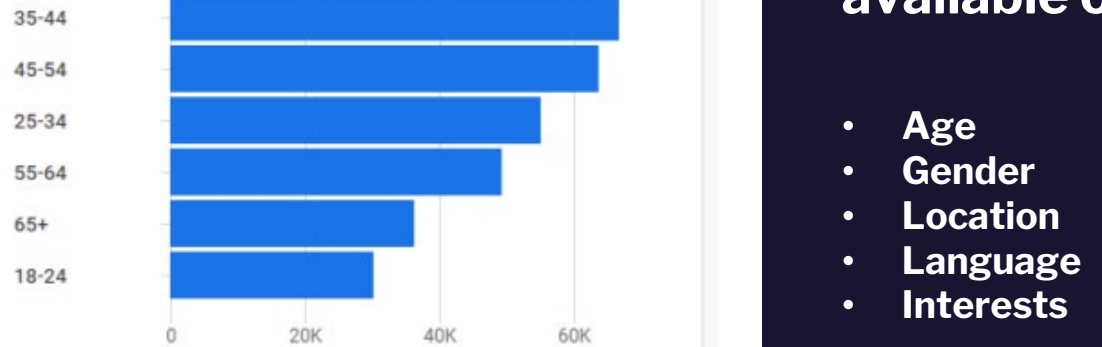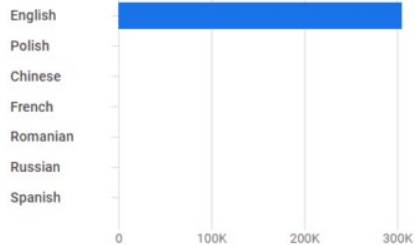
Who are your users? Break it down

**Types of users in GA4**
Google Analytics 4 recognizes four different types of users:

- Active users
- Total users
- New users
- Returning users

- **Average engagement time:** the time an active user has your site in focus or your app in the foreground

- **Users in last 30 mins:** for real-time user activity, broken down by page

- **User stickiness:** to compare active user engagement in a narrow window with a broader one, i.e. the ratio of daily active users (DAU) to monthly active users (MAU)

- **User activity over time:** to chart the number of active users over the past 30 days, seven days, and one day
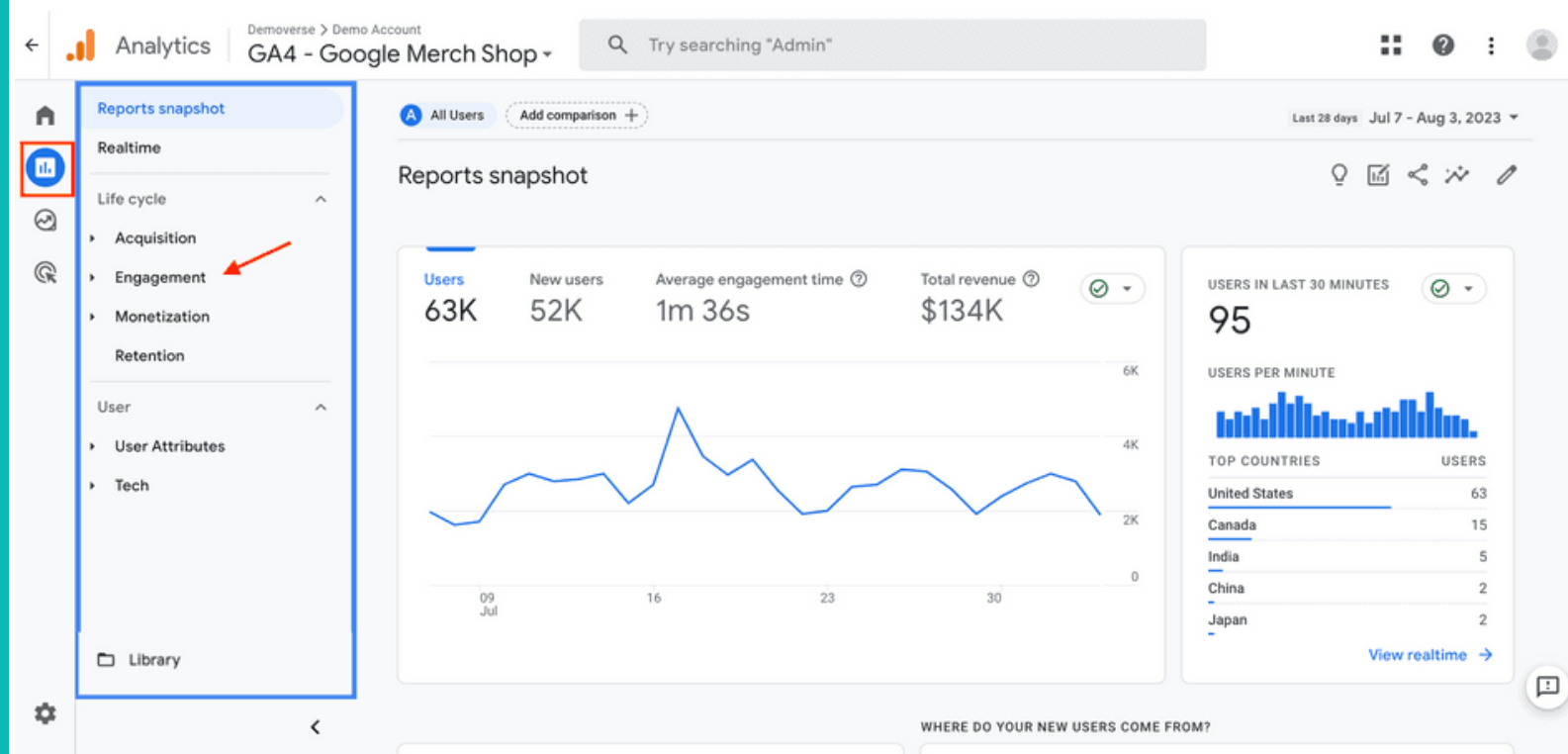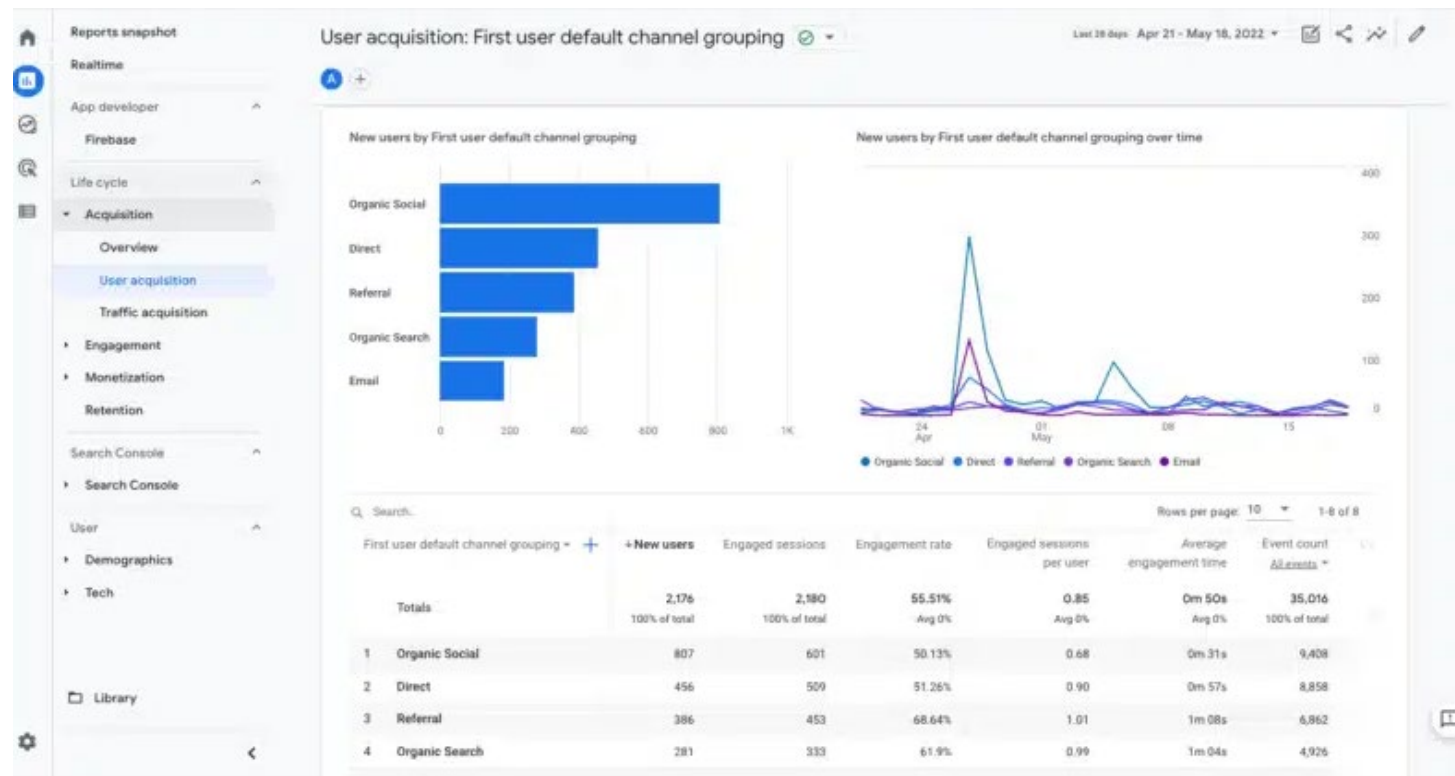
Where to find the GA4 Acquisition Reports

User acquisition: the first campaign/source/medium observed for the user (or more accurately, for the browser/cookie)

Traffic acquisition: the campaign/source/medium of the session – this will be most similar to what you are used to in Universal analytics

Using the Traffic Acquisition Report
When you select the Traffic acquisition report, you'll notice that the report defaults to the Default Channel Grouping view of data.

In UA, you could select a *Channels* report to get this view, or you could choose to look at the "source / medium" report directly. In GA4, you can get all of these views from one single table. To do so, you can change the primary dimension in the dropdown of the table to switch the dimension view.

Content Drilldown

it's important to dive in to the content to see which pages people spend the most and least time on.

To do this, click the Behavior tab and go to the Site Content drop-down. You'll want to look at the Content Drilldown, as well as Landing and Exit Pages to see which pages are most viewed on your website.

Content Drilldown is the overview of which pages on your website are visited the most.

Seeing which pages, and blog posts, are most viewed by your audience is helpful in guiding your web development strategy; you want to create more of what works.

Why is integrating Google Ads with GA4 the first step?

GA4 also provides direct integrations with a variety of platforms.

One is Google Ads integration. This lets you see the full customer cycle, from clicking on ads to completing micro and macro conversions. This step also enables remarketing in Google Ads using lists based on the Analytics audiences that SEOs and marketers create in GA4.

But Google Ads integration is just the first step.

SEOs need their companies and clients to integrate Search Console with GA4 so they can analyze organic search traffic to the site.

This integration lets you see:

- Where your site ranks in search results.

- Which queries generate clicks.

- How those clicks translate into user behavior, like which landing pages engage more users and how many of these users go on to convert.

All the Google Ads dimensions offered by GA4
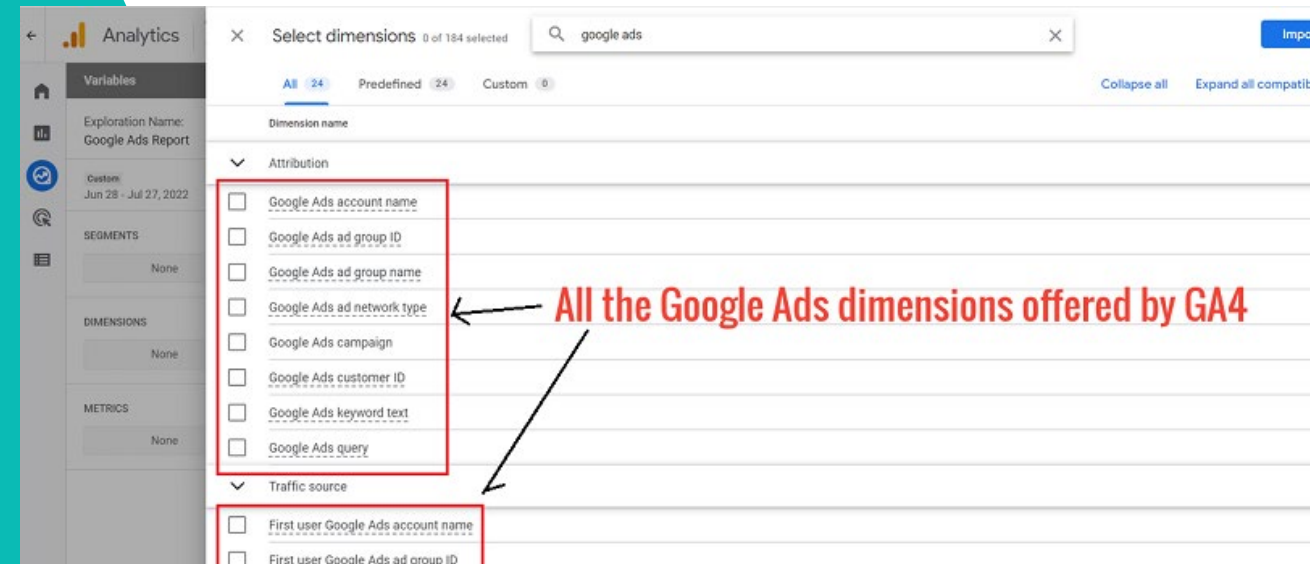
What events should we set up on our website?

Most events showing your contribution to the bottom line are collected automatically when you set up GA4. But they are not reported and cannot be used to create audiences until you enable enhanced measurement.

Here are seven of the automatically collected events that SEOs may want to enable for enhanced measurement:

- **File_download:** When a user clicks a link leading to a document, presentation, or audio file.
- **Form_start:** When a user interacts with a form in a session for the first time.
- **Form_submit:** When the user submits a form.
- **Scroll:** When a user reaches the bottom 90% of each page for the first time.
- **Video_start:** When the video starts playing.
- **Video_progress:** When the video progresses past 10%, 25%, 50%, and 75% duration time.
- **Video_complete:** When the video ends.

GA4 uses event-based data instead of session-based data. So, now you need to measure specific interactions after users come to your site and which default channel they used to get there.
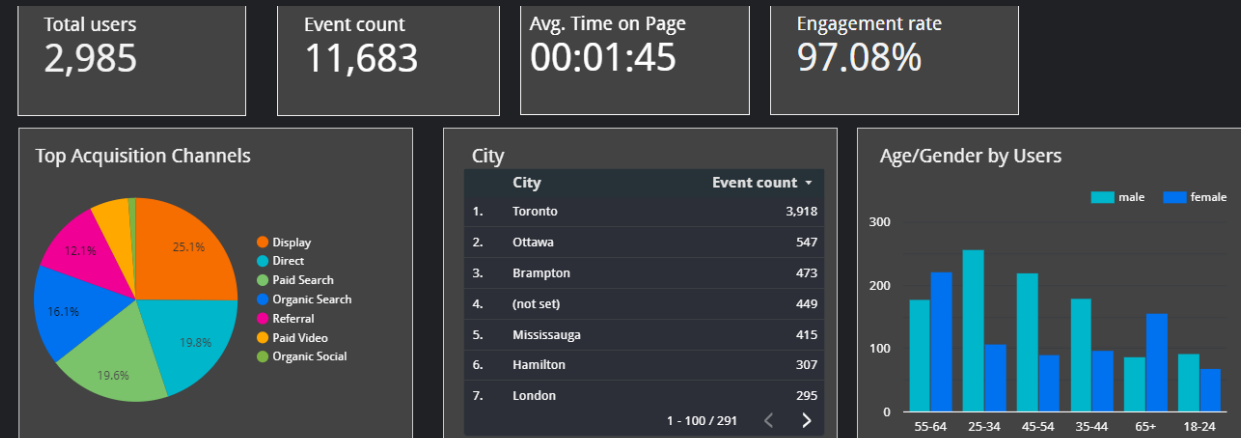
When should we measure micro conversions?

You probably know that micro conversions measure important steps to completing macro conversions.

But executives only seem interested in macro conversions. So, setting up micro conversions was not worth it – until GA4 came along.

In most cases, the process is as easy as going to *Admin,* clicking on *Events,* and selecting the toggle under *Mark as a conversion.*

For example, you might want to measure the following micro conversions:

- Scroll to 90% of a blog post or article.

- Play at least 50% of a product video.

- Complete a tutorial.

- Download a white paper.

- Complete a registration form.

- Register for a service.

- Add merchandise to the shopping cart.

If you can associate monetary values with your micro conversions, then more executives will think that they matter.

Let's say 10% of the people who sign up for a newsletter go on to become customers, and your average transaction is $500. Then you might associate $50 (i.e., 10% of $500) as the monetary value of a newsletter sign-up.

To add a value when someone has completed a registration form:

- On the left, click *Admin > Events*.

- Click *Create event* to see the table of custom events.

- Click the event to modify.

- In the *Parameter configuration* section, click *Add modification*.

- In the *Parameter* field, enter currency.

- In the *Value* field, enter a currency type (e.g., USD).

- Click *Add modification*.

- In the *Parameter* field, enter the value.

- In the *New* value field, enter a value (e.g., 50 for $50).

- Click *Save*.

Configuration

Custom event name ⑦

registered

Matching conditions

Create a custom event when another event matches ALL of the following conditions

Parameter	Operator	Value
event_name	equals	page_view

Add condition

Parameter configuration

☑ Copy parameters from the source event

Modify parameters ⑦

Add modification

Where do we need to customize our reports?

GA4 offers different report collections based on the information provided during setup.

The first default set of reports you might see is the *Life cycle collection,* which helps you understand each stage in the customer journey – from acquisition to engagement to monetization to retention.

It is replaced by the *Business objectives collection* if someone selected "Raise brand awareness," "Examine user behavior," "Generate leads." or "Drive online sales" during setup.

There is also a *User collection,* which helps you understand the people who use your site, including their demographics (e.g., age, location) and the technology they use (e.g., browser version, app version).

You can also:

- Change the primary dimension in a report.

- Add a secondary dimension to a report.

- Apply a filter to show a subset of your report data.

- Adjust the date range in a report.

Variables

Analysis Name: **1.**
Exploration

Custom
Jan 4 - Feb 2, 2021

SEGMENTS +
- US
- Direct traffic
- Paid traffic
- Mobile traffic
- Tablet traffic

DIMENSIONS +
- Event name
- Gender
- Country
- Device category

Tab Settings

TECHNIQUE **2.**
Exploration

VISUALIZATION

SEGMENT COMPARISONS
Drop or select segment

ROWS
- City
- Drop or select dimension

Start row   1

Show rows   10

Nested rows   No

Exploration 1   **3.**

Device category	desktop	mobile	tablet	Totals
City	Active users	Active users	Active users	↓ Active users
Totals	83,536 91.7% of total	7,332 8.1% of total	262 0.3% of total	91,064 100.0% of total
1 (not set)	6,865	610	27	7,483
2 London	2,050	199	5	2,253
3 New York	929	56	1	985
4 Sydney	896	58	1	955
5 Singapore	762	96	2	860
6 Paris	780	54	2	835
7 Berlin	739	51	3	793
8 Toronto	699	48	1	748
9 Bengaluru	650	71	1	721
10 Stockholm	604	75	1	680

How To Read Analysis Hub Reports

1.Return to the Analysis Hub.

2.**Variables Column:** The variables column is where you will select the data you want to use in your analysis. Date range, segments, dimensions, metrics.

3.**Tab Settings Column:** The tab settings column is where you will specify the analysis technique, add dimensions, metrics and apply segments.

4.**Segments:** Segments are different groups of users. Drag and drop different groups of users to your report to compare and contrast how they are behaving. If you don't see the segment you want to use, add your own by clicking on the plus icon.

5.**Dimensions:** Dimensions are the things you want to analyze. For example, event count, active users, transactions, etc. Drag and drop dimensions as rows or columns in the Tab Settings area.

6.**Metrics:** Metrics provide the numbers in your analysis. Add metrics to the Values area in Tab Settings.

7.**Visualization:** Choose what the report will look like. Exploration options include table, pie chart, line graph, and more.

8.**Values:** Drag the metrics that you want to display as columns in the report. Cell type can be displayed as a bar chart, plain text, or heat map.

9.**Tabs:** Tabs display your visualizations. An analysis can contain up to 10 tabs. To add a new tab, click the plus icon.

10.**Display:** Interact with the data by right-clicking a data point in the visualization.

ANY QUESTIONS?