

Hands-on Workshop: Google Analytics Basics

Google Analytics Sign In

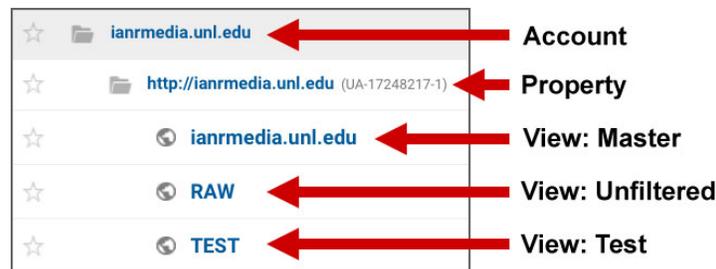
1. Go to <http://www.google.com/analytics>.
2. Click **SIGN IN** in the upper right corner, select **Analytics** in the dropdown menu and sign in with your Google account's email and password.

If you don't have a login for your own site you can use the following test login (*note: the test login will be deleted after the workshop*).

Email: [REDACTED]

Password: [REDACTED]

3. Click the bar graph icon  in the upper left corner to view a list of your accounts.
4. Click an account name to hide/show an account's properties and views. Accounts can have multiple properties and views (ex: site URL, RAW and TEST).



5. Click your site's **Master** view (site's URL next to globe icon or the one you use for reports)

Exercise #1: Google Analytics Home

1. If not already on your **Google Analytics HOME** page, on the left navigation click **HOME**
The **AUDIENCE OVERVIEW** graph at the top compares the selected date range (solid line) to the previous date range (dashed line)
2. Click on the **Sessions** tabs above the graph. *The "Last 7 days" should be selected in the dropdown.*
3. Mouseover the data points on the graph to pop up more detail.
 - Which day, in the last 7 days, had the most sessions? _____ least sessions? _____
4. Change the "Last 7 days" dropdown to "Yesterday".
 - Which time of the day yesterday had the most sessions? _____

The **REAL-TIME REPORT** shows how many users are currently on your site and which pages they are on. *A Real-Time report displaying no activity, when there are known users, can indicate analytics is not set up on the site.*

- How many **Active Users** are on the site right now? _____
- 5. In another browser window or tab, go to the website for the google account (*url of site displays next to  icon*)
- 6. Click around the website then view your Google Analytics account HOME page Real-Time report
 - How many **Active Users** are on the site right now? _____
 - Are the pages you clicked on displaying under “Top Active Pages”? Yes or No

The **PAGES REPORT** shows which pages get the most traffic on your site.

- 7. Under the “What pages do your users visit?”, click “PAGES REPORT>” to view the full report.
 - Which page has the highest number of **Pageviews**?

- 8. In the Pages table, click the **Avg. Time on Page** column header and sort the column from highest to lowest.
 - Which page did users spend the most time on (*ignore links starting with /http*)?

- 9. Click the  arrow icon next to the page, to open the page in the browser.
 - Looking at the page, **circle** why you think users spend a lot of time on it?
 - a. Page takes a long time to load
 - b. Page has content like videos or a slideshow that take a while to view
 - c. Long page with a lot of content to read
 - d. Page has content that might be referenced while working on something else
 - e. No idea why

Exercise #2: Google Analytics Administration

- 1. On the left navigation, at the very bottom, click  **ADMIN**.

There are three levels of access: ACCOUNT, PROPERTY and VIEW. If you have access to ACCOUNT, when you click “User Management” you will see your login listed with account permissions selected. If you have access to a PROPERTY, you will see “.js Tracking Info” listed under the PROPERTY heading. In order to login, you must at least have “VIEW” access. Permissions can be assigned for access (manage users, edit, collaborate, read and analyze).

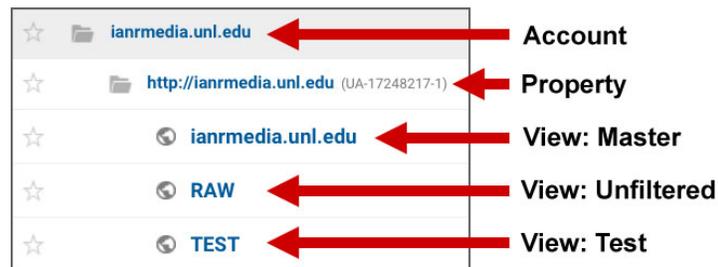
- Circle which level(s) you have access to? ACCOUNT, PROPERTY, VIEW

A person can have several accounts. An account can have several properties. Properties are sites (mobile apps, kiosk, etc.). Each property has a unique tracking ID. Properties can have

several views. Views are created when you need reports for a subset of data (a subdomain, filtered view, etc.).

2. Under the “VIEW” heading, click the dropdown arrow next to the selected view’s name.
 - How many views are listed? _____
 - What are the names of the views? _____

Each property should have at least three views where one of the views is unfiltered, one is for testing filters and one is the master view (*the master view should include bot filtering to remove spam and a filter to remove Web Audit hits*).



3. Under VIEW, select the master view in the dropdown.
4. Click on View Settings and check the following:
 - Does the view have the correct Time zone selected (Central Time)? Yes or No
 - Is Bot Filtering checked? Yes or No
 - If you answered no to the above, and have a RAW unfiltered view, consider selecting the correct time zone and/or check bot filtering on your Master view and click “Save”.
5. On the VIEW, left navigation, select “Filters”.
 - Is there a filter named “WebAudit”? Yes or No
 - If you answered no to above, ask the person with your site’s account level access to add the filter. *This will prevent the Web Audit bot from inflating your hits.*
<https://ianrmedia.unl.edu/resources/add-filter-exclude-webaudit-traffic-google-analytics>.

You have to have ACCOUNT level access to create filters and integrate your account with 3rd party software.

You have to have PROPERTY level access to create new views.

Exercise #3: Google Analytics Adding an Annotation

Annotations are dated notes you can add on a report graph to keep track of event that may affect traffic such as launching a marketing campaign, major site updates, network changes, etc.

1. On the left navigation click **AUDIENCE>Overview**
2. Under the graph timeline, click the  down arrow and click **+Create new annotation**
3. In the date text box, change the date to Oct 1, 2017. In the larger text area, type “Site URL was changed from http:// to https://” then click “Save”.
4. Change the report date range to Sept 1, 2017 – Nov 1, 2017.
 - a. In the upper right corner, click the down arrow next to the current date range.
 - b. Click in the text boxes and edit the dates.
 - c. Click the **Apply** button.
5. Click the  note icon on the graph’s timeline to view the annotation. *To delete an annotation, you can click the edit link then click delete.*

Exercise #4: Google Analytics Site Speed Suggestions

How long it takes a page to load depends on how much data is downloaded. Optimizing images can reduce the amount of data and speed up your site.

1. On the left navigation click **BEHAVIOR>Site Speed>Speed Suggestions**
2. Find your home page link (/) in the list. Click on the **PageSpeed Suggestions # total** link across from it.
 - Is **Optimize images** listed under **Possible Optimizations**? Yes or No
 - If you answered yes above, click “Show how to fix” (*if no, see if you can find a page that does have it*). How many images on the page can be optimized? _____
 - How many total KiBs can you reduce them by? _____
 - Which image can you reduce the most?

To optimize a jpg image, you can open it in Photoshop, select “save for web” and lower the quality setting. If the image looks blotchy, blurry or the colors change too much, increase the quality to the point where you can’t see a noticeable difference from the original then resave it. Replace the original image on your site with the new optimized version that has a lower file size.

Exercise #5: Google Analytics Drilling Down

The **Landing Pages** report displays the first page users hit when visiting your site (*at the start of a session*). The top landing page is often the home page and displays in the report as a forward slash (/).

If you see multiple URLs in the report that also link to your home page (/welcome, /home etc.) those URLs should be redirected to the / version to avoid duplicate content. Duplicate content can negatively affect how well your page ranks in search engines and it can split your analytics data into separate rows in your report.

1. On the left navigation click **BEHAVIOR>Site Content>Landing Pages**
2. Select a date range to view traffic for the last 7 days.
 - d. In the upper right corner, click the down arrow next to the current date range.
 - e. In the **Date Range** dropdown select **Last 7 days** (if your table doesn't display enough data, change the date range dropdown to **Last month**).
 - f. Click the **Apply** button.

3. Which landing page has the highest number of sessions?

4. Click on the landing page URL with the highest number of Sessions.

5. Above the table, next to **Primary Dimension**, click "Source".

- Which site is most of the traffic coming from?
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6. Above the table, next to **Primary Dimension**, click "Landing Page".

7. In the **Secondary dimension** dropdown, type **Network Domain** and select it.

8. Above the table, next to search box on the right, click "advanced".

9. In the search filter dropdowns select Include, Network Domain, containing unl.edu as shown below and click "Apply".



- What % of the landing page's Total Sessions are traffic coming from UNL's network? _____

10. Above the table, next to **Primary Dimension**, click "Landing Page".

11. In the **Secondary dimension** dropdown, type **Device Category** and select it.

- Which device had the highest number of sessions for the landing page? _____

12. Try selecting other secondary dimensions. *If your site has demographics set up on it, you can select user information like age and gender.*

- List a few interesting things you discovered about the Landing Page

Including links to other relevant pages on your top landing pages is a good way to increase engagement on your site and lower your bounce rate.

Exercise #6: Google Analytics Landing Page Search Query (Keywords)

The **Search Query** report displays keywords that were typed into Google Search and resulted in a page on your site displaying in the search results. The Search Console **Landing Pages** report displays the URLs listed in search results (*unlike the Behavior>Site Content> Landing Pages*

report, in this report someone may or may not have actually landed on the page, instead it shows pages with the opportunity to be a landing page if clicked on from Google search results).

1. On the left navigation click **ACQUISITION>Search Console>Landing Pages**
 2. Select a date range to view traffic for the **Last month**.
 - g. In the upper right corner, click the down arrow next to the current date range.
 - h. In the **Date Range** dropdown select **Last month** (if your table doesn't display enough data, change the date range to a longer one in the text boxes).
 - i. Click the **Apply** button.
- Which **landing page** has the highest number of impressions?

 - How many **clicks** did it get (number of times your URL was clicked on from Google search results)? _____
 - What is its **average position** in Google search results? _____
 - On average, which page of Google search results does it display on (ave. position 1-10 is page 1, 11-20 is page 2, etc.)? _____
3. Click on the **landing page** URL with the highest number of Impressions.

When there are too many results to display, Google may aggregate keywords with a lower search volume into a search query labeled (other).

- Which search query has the highest **CTR** (Click Through Rate)?

- Which search query has the highest number of **clicks**?

A high CTR is good but you also have to look at impressions and clicks when determining which keywords are performing the best.

Exercise #7: Google Analytics Finding an Anomaly

An anomaly is something that is unexpected or deviates from normal. One of the reasons for viewing your Google Analytics data is to identify anomalies. In some cases, an anomaly can indicate an issue with the site that needs addressed. One way to spot an anomaly is by looking on the line graph for usually high spikes or drops in traffic or activity.

1. On the left navigation click **ACQUISITION>Search Console>Queries**
2. Enter a date range to view traffic for September 1 through yesterday.
 - Looking at the graph, are there any noticeable changes in the click data? Yes or No

- If “yes”, explain.

- What big change happened with your site during the month of October that may have caused the anomaly?

When you find an anomaly ask the following questions

- Is it on one day or over a range of days?
- Is there an annotation that may explain it?

If **over a range of days** ask the following questions

- Did the anomaly happen on just your site or multiple sites? If multiple sites, was there a network-wide update made?
- Did anything change on your site around the same date range?

If it's on **one day**, change your date range to that specific day.

- Drill down to find out where the majority of the traffic is or is no longer coming from
 - Which page?
 - Which channel? Organic, referral, direct, social etc.
 - Which Network Domain? unl.edu or outside of unl.edu
 - Which browser and version? IE 11 etc.
 - Is the hostname your site's domain?

Knowing the origin and the page/url can help you determine the cause and whether or not the anomaly is something to celebrate or fix.

- Referral link is broken and needs redirected
- Spam or Web Audit traffic needs filtered out
- Page displays broken in a popular browser
- Page loads too slow
- URL of a page changed
- Page was promoted in an email blast or on a popular social media post (yeah!)

References:

The New Google Analytics Home: Know Your Data

<https://analytics.googleblog.com/2017/04/effortless-analytics-new-google.html>

Search Console Reports

<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1308626?hl=en>

User Permissions

<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2884495?hl=en>