



CONVERSION UPLIFT

Get More From Digital

A Guide for Migrating to Google Analytics 4

Date: Updated 30th October 2022

Prepared by: Neal Cole, neal.cole@conversion-uplift.co.uk,

Prepare for the future with Google Analytics 4



1.0 Google Analytics (UA) Sunset Date

Google has announced that Google Analytics (Universal Analytics) will stop processing new data on 1st July 2023. For the paid version of Google Analytics, GA360 this date has been extended by a year 1st July 2024. After these dates, Google Analytics UA will be a read-only platform (historical data only) and within 6 months UA properties will be deleted.

2.0 Why has Google made this decision?

The changing regulatory and business environment had led to Google's decision to press ahead with a single web analytics platform, Google Analytics 4.

Changing regulatory environment:

Regulations such as GDPR and CCPA have changed how data can be collected and used.

Browser Updates and 3rd Party Cookies:

Browser updates and Safari's Intelligent Tracking Prevention (ITP) are impacting upon data collection, the use of third-party cookies and device detection. ITP uses algorithms to classify and then partition off third-party tracking cookies after 24 hours, making them useless, and then removing them after 30 days if the user does not interact with the source.

User privacy controls:

Users increasingly expect more control, transparency of data collected and how it is used for targeting of personalised ads.

3.0 What is Google Analytics 4?

Google Analytics 4 is Google's next generation web analytics platform which utilises the power of machine learning to provide more valuable insights about web and app users.

We recommend you create a GA4 property as soon as you can to begin collecting data before GA UA sunsets on 1st July 2023. Google Analytics 4 incorporates several new features compared to GA UA, including:

- It is an [event-based system](#), which means that it can be configured to measure any type of interaction on your website or app, including clicks, scrolling, viewing of videos and much more.
- Machine learning allows GA4 to automatically alert you to new trends and behaviours by processing data over time.
- The use of AI also enables GA4 to [create predictive audiences](#) which uses machine learning to calculate the probability of individual users purchasing or churning in the near future. These audiences can be used with Google Ads to create remarketing and re-engagement campaigns to improve your conversion rate.
- GA4 is a cross-device solution which means it can measure users as they move between mobile and desktop. It uses multiple unique identifiers including user IDs, and unique Google Signals from users who agree to ad personalisation.
- The solution provides for greater integration with Google products because it tracks users across app and web. This means it can measure conversions from YouTube engaged users whether they are in-app or on a website.
- The Explore reporting engine provides for a [powerful funnel visualisation report](#) which was only previously available in GA360.
- With GA4 you can connect for free with BigQuery. This means you can export unsampled raw data and analyse it in BigQuery. This allows you to segment your audience and set up targeted advertising.

4.0 Where should you start?

Conversion Uplift has completed countless GA4 audits and migration projects, and has been working with GA4 since its launch. Our Google certified experts would love to support you on your new measurement journey.

We recommend you use the migration process as an opportunity to review your performance measurement strategy and the metrics and dimensions you measure in Google Analytics.

Before proceeding with the migration process, it's important to define your customer needs at each step of the user journey so that you can align your leading indicators and identify which aspects of the journey to optimise.

Digital Journey	Attract	Connect	Inform	Convert	Deliver	Nurture
Customer Objective	I want to find a suitable car and get an affordable loan that matches my budget.	The website and landing experience is relevant, trustworthy, compelling, and instantly shows the benefit of using the website.	I have all the information I need about getting a loan and buying a car from xxx	The website allows me to arrange an affordable loan. To search and find a suitable car with a minimum amount of friction.	My experience of arranging everything through XXX made collection/delivery stress free.	I will return to the website to manage my loan and settlement. I will share my experience
Leading indicators	Brand awareness and trustworthy (market research) Share of SERPs (Search Console)	Bounce rate Time on page Car searches Proceeding to application	Users applying for loans. Car purchases Verification	Online loan acceptance rate (%) Overall conversion rate (Agreements signed and countersigned)	% applications accepted % payment errors Operational-cost efficiency measure Settlement rate (%)	Users logging into customer portal Returning users returning to make new applications
Optimise	Reputational SEO Brand comms	Landing experience Benefit messaging	Application experience	Car search, verification experience and loan acceptance process.	Time to set arrange vehicle collection or delivery	Customer self-service portal experience and loyalty programme
Source: Jonny Longden at Journey Further						

How do we plan the GA4 migration process?

We normally begin with an audit of your existing Google Analytics set up to identify obsolete and redundant tags in GTM and hard-coded events on your website. This allows us to evaluate where improvements can be made in GA4, and it gives you the opportunity to define what is and what isn't in scope.

Our Google Analytics 4 checklist will help ensure your migration process is implemented to align with your business and performance measurement needs.

	Planning	Implement	Validation	Onboarding	Transformation
Summary	<p>Audit existing GA3 events and pixels to identify required events and remove obsolete & paused tags.</p> <p>Review current analytics strategy and get agreement with stakeholders around performance marketing KPIs and if to migrate to server-side GTM.</p>	<p>Configure and implement new GA4 properties in parallel with existing UA tracking.</p> <p>Activate data streams and begin to collect data.</p>	<p>Ensure data is complete and accurate by comparing to existing metrics.</p> <p>Ensure we understand and can explain any variances.</p>	<p>Replicate existing reports & dashboards using GA4 data.</p> <p>Familiarize users with the new interface, introducing new concepts & metrics</p>	<p>Investigate advanced GA4 features and integrations.</p> <p>Consider exporting raw GA4 event data using Google BigQuery connector to allow more advanced analysis and modelling.</p>

When we implement your GA4 migration, we use our extensive experience to tailor the process to best meet your needs and budget. We have a comprehensive checklist to ensure nothing is missed and conduct thorough testing before we hand-over to your team. We also offer training and support services to transfer knowledge when required.

5.0 Checklist for Google Analytics 4

Google Analytics 4 Console	Google Tag Manager	Developer	Reporting	Training
Create GA4 property for live & staging/UAT sites.	Create & configure:	Tasks Work with developers to manage scripts	Compare GA4 data with GA3 and any source of truth data.	Transfer knowledge
Configure console including:	New or existing GTM container.	Remove hard-coded GA3 scripts.	Migrate & create reports.	Grant permissions & access.
Data retention period.	Page view/Config tag	Add new data layer events if required.	Review the use & value of existing reports.	Provide training to transfer knowledge on:
Reporting identity	Data for different environments		Agree reporting needs.	GA4 console
Attribution model & lookback window	Existing events/tags		Migrate existing reports to using G4 data.	Custom reports
Exclude internal traffic	New events/tags		Create new Looker Data Studio reports.	Audiences
Set domain and cross-domain traffic	Exclude PII		Create new Explore reports.	Register custom dimensions
Internal site search	Affiliate tracking			GTM and new event creation
Disable duplicate enhanced measurement events	Persist campaign data			
Referral exclusion list	Content groupings			
Cookie duration settings	Remove unwanted query parameters			
Align session time out period	Transform GA3 ecommerce for GA4			
Add landing page dimension to reports				
Configure agreed metrics in reports				
Hide obsolete reports				

6.0 Checklist - Continued:

Google Analytics 4 Console	Google Tag Manager	Developer	Reports	Training
Integrations: Google Search Console Google Ads account BigQuery Publish Search Console report Create audiences for remarketing <u>Register:</u> Custom dimensions & metrics Google Optimize parameters	Create scripts for new data layer events. New custom dimensions & metrics New user scoped dimensions	Tasks Consider moving to Server-Side GTM to remove need for 3 rd party cookies and improve site speed.	Investigate importing off-line data via GA4 protocol	Provide ongoing training needs to ensure GA4 is fully utilised.

Prepare for the future with Google Analytics 4.

Let's talk: email info@conversion-uplift.co.uk

+44 (0)1978 - 896787