

Murray Digital Platform – Fact Sheet Seven

Google Analytics Terminology

Background

Throughout the development and implementation of the Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) Digital Platform Project there has been various learnings that can assist destinations with improving their websites performance or consumer facing pages.

To assist destinations maximise their online performance and use of the digital platform a series of 'Fact Sheets' have been created to document and share these learnings. This is the seventh fact sheet in this series.

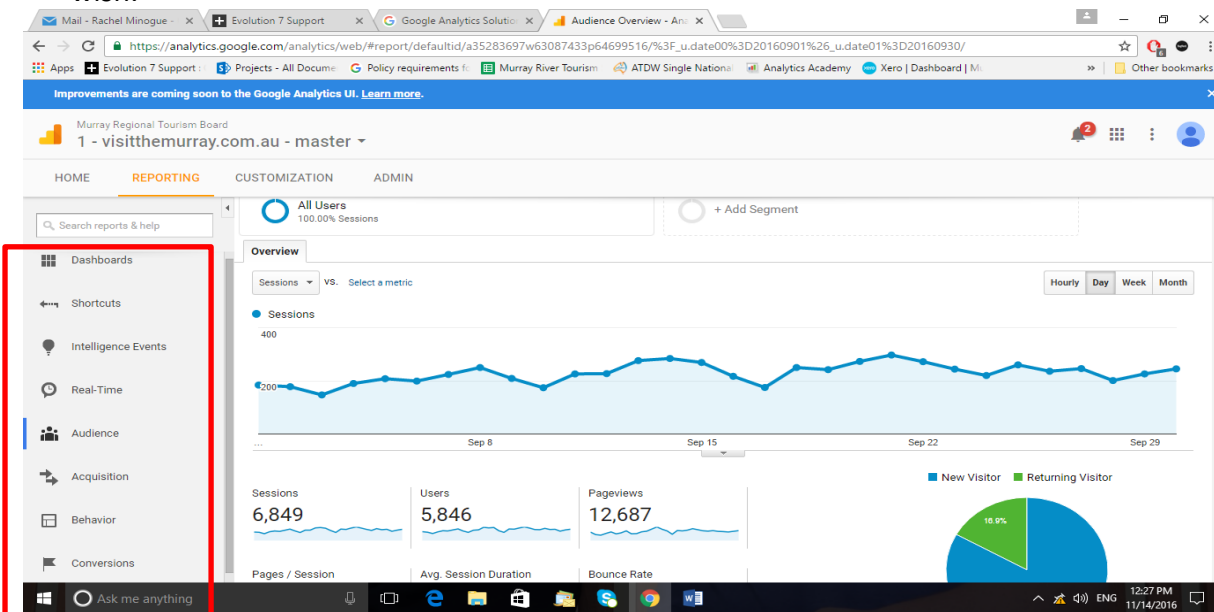
Google Analytics (GA)

Google Analytics is one of the most popular web visitor tracking tools and has been enabled on every destination website associated with the Murray Digital Platform.

Analytics can be very overwhelming. There are so many metrics with unfamiliar terms/jargon that you may not be familiar with. This Fact Sheet intends to provide a beginners introduction to common GA terms to assist with understanding how these can be used/monitored to maintain and manage your destination website moving forward.

Commonly used Google Analytics Sections

1. **Acquisition:** This section reveals how you acquire your website visitors and more importantly how did they get there.
2. **Audience:** When you arrive in GA you will be automatically taken to the audience section. This section provides an in-depth look at your community's traffic and the behaviour of users after they arrive.
3. **Behaviour:** The Behaviour section reveals what your visitors do on your website. Specifically, the reports tell you what pages people visit and what actions they take while visiting.
4. **Dashboards:** This is where you can set up GA reports and select key performance measures that you wish to report on. The report(s) can be automatically setup to email to a list of people as often as you wish.



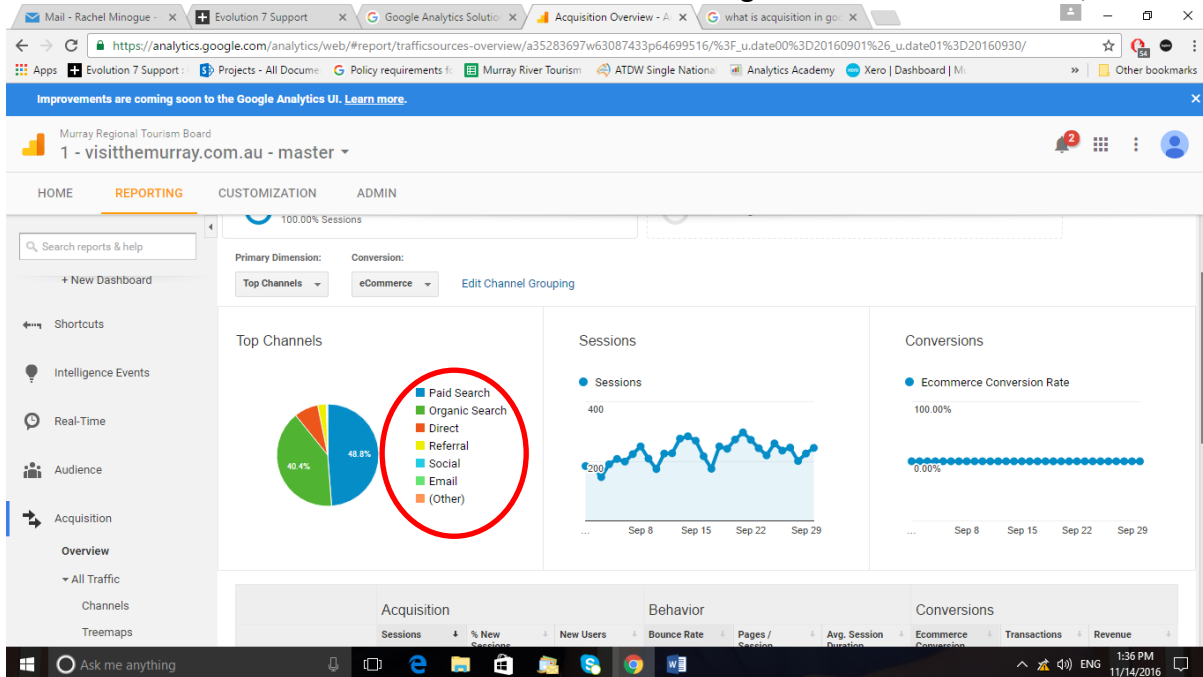
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Common Google Analytics Terms Explained

1. Acquisition Section

The screen shot below is from www.visitthemurray.com.au for Acquisition/Overview. The top metrics for the section as circled in red are described below along with a few other metrics;



Traffic: Traffic can be divided into multiple categories including, direct, organic, paid, social, referral and email.

Organic Search: Visitors who come to your website by clicking on the unpaid (organic or natural) search engine results.

Paid Search: Visitors who come to your website from Google AdWords ads, paid search engine keywords and other online paid ad campaigns. This data will show you how effective your paid online advertising is.

Direct Traffic: This refers to visitors coming directly to your site. Either by:

- Typing in your URL.
- Via auto completion in your address bar (when you start to type a web address, and you are prompted with options).
- Via bookmark (when your site is saved for future reference).

Direct Traffic gives you an indication of how many visitors already have considerable knowledge about what you do and are coming back for more!

Referral Traffic: Other websites that refer or send visitors to your website are called referring sites. Knowing where your traffic is coming from allows you to focus more resources on sites that are referring more traffic and perhaps the development of a back links strategy to grow referral traffic.

Search Engines: The three main search engines are Google, Yahoo, and Bing. Google Analytics segments your data so you can see how much traffic each search engine is generating.

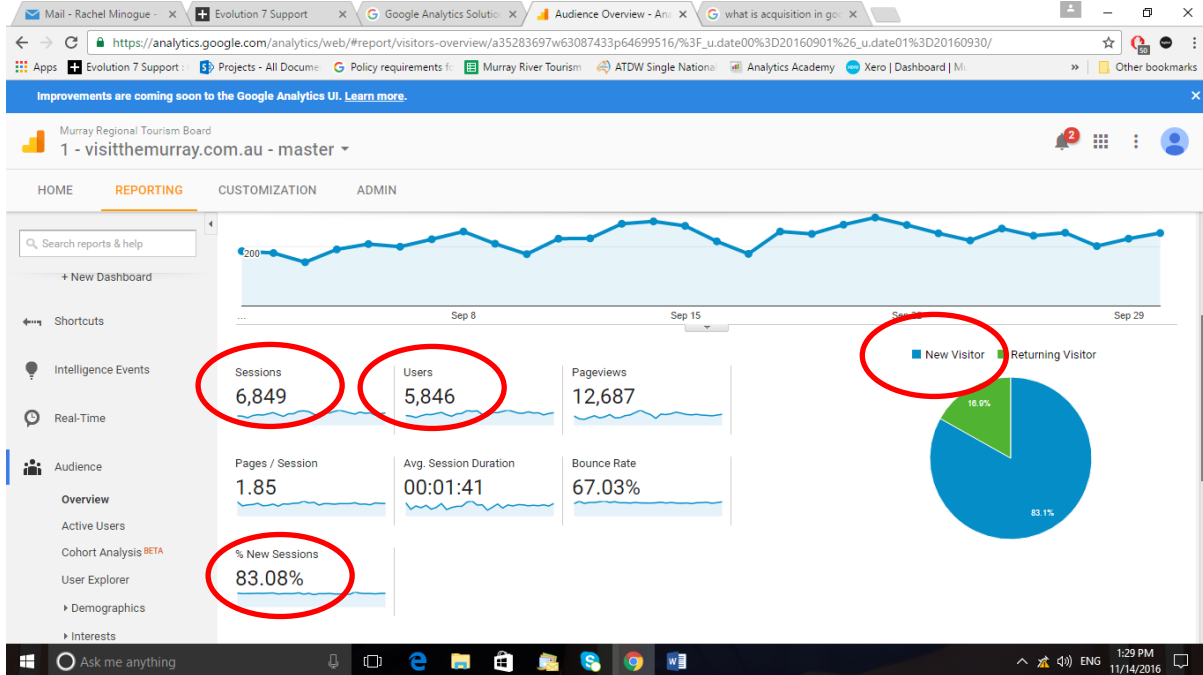
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Keywords: These are the words that visitors used to find your website when using a search engine. This information shows you what users are actually looking for when they find you. This also helps you to determine potential new keywords to target as part of a Google Adwords strategy.

2. Audience Section

The screen shot below is from www.visitthemurray.com.au for Audience/Overview. The top 4 metrics for the section as circled in red are described below along with a few other metrics;



Sessions: The number of times your website is accessed (this is different from number of Users) and the period of time users are actively engaged on your website. Watching the trends in your Sessions allows you to analyse which aspects of your online marketing are working.

New Sessions: An estimated percentage of first-time visits.

Users: The number of individuals who viewed your website. One user can visit your site multiple times.

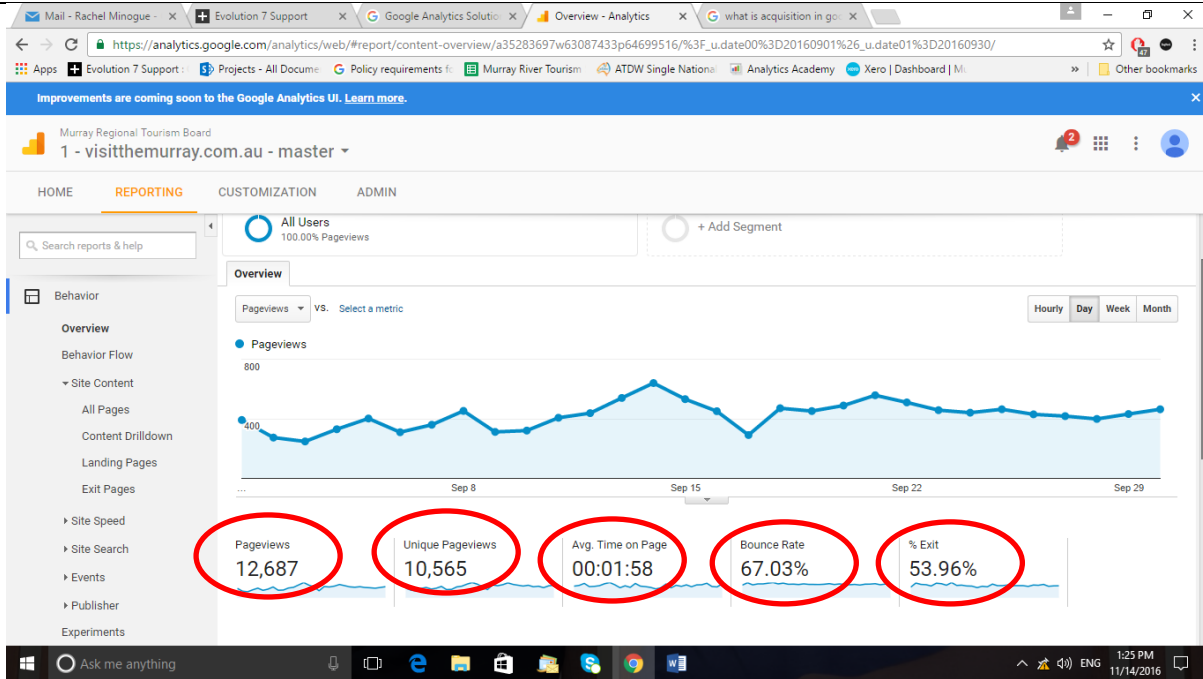
New Visitor: People who have not previously or recently visited your site are considered new visitors. If the person has previously visited your website by deleted cookies, cleared their browser history, or visited in private browsing mode, that user will be counted as a new visitor.

3. Behaviour Section

The screen shot below is from www.visitthemurray.com.au for Behaviour/Overview. The top 5 metrics for the section as circled in red are described below along with a few other metrics;

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Page Views: The number of pages a user views over the duration of their visit to your website. Page views allow you to see which pages on your site are the most popular.

Unique Page Views: The number of sessions during which the specified page was viewed at least once.

Average Time on Page: The average amount of time a user spends viewing a specified page.

Bounce Rate: The number of people who visit only one page of your website and then leave (either clicking back to the results page or closing the browser). In other words, they don't dig deeper into any of your content. They arrive, and then they leave. A high Bounce Rate often indicates that your pages are not relevant to what your visitors are looking for or alternatively they have found what they require on the first page that they viewed.

Evaluate and adjust factors that might contribute to your bounce rate, like site layout and navigation. Use only your past performances as a rubric, and try to improve your current bounce rate relative to your previous data. Provide enough time between changes to collect sufficient data to evaluate the impact the changes may be having on your users and their behaviours.

Tourism Industry Benchmark for bounce rate as advised by Visit Victoria is: 40-60%.

Exit Rate: This is the percentage of visitors who leave your site after looking at a particular page. If the visitor only looks at one page and leaves, that is the Bounce Rate, if they look at several pages and then leave, Exit Rate will tell you which of those pages has the highest rate of people leaving after viewing it. As a session always has to end somewhere as tourism industry benchmark figure has not been provided for this measure.

Top Exit Pages: The pages on your website that visitors leave from. In Google Analytics, these pages are listed in order from those the most visitors exited your site to those pages that visitors least exited

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your site. If users are leaving your site from a Thank You page after purchasing or downloading information, that is good. If one of your Top Exit Pages is the Home page on your site, that is not.

Events: An event can be any action you want to track on a webpage, for example you could track how often a file is downloaded or a video is played.

Landing Page: The first page a visitor lands on when they click through from the search engine results page. The homepage is the most obvious, and usual landing page.

Top Landing Pages: The first pages that users land on, or come to when entering your Website. Within Google Analytics, these pages are listed in order of most visited to least visited. This data is important because it allows you to see which pages are attracting visitors.

It can be interesting though to see other pages where people enter your site. Are you making it easy for them to get to the content they need from there? Don't forget that visitors can arrive deeper within the site. It's very important to make sure that your crucial information is on each and every page.

This is also an important metric if you have any sort of campaign or promotion where you are not sending people to your homepage but to a page deeper within the content. This metric allows you to see how these visitors are interacting with your site.

Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the Google Analytics helpdesk from this link https://support.google.com/analytics/topic/1120718?hl=en&ref_topic=3544907

Conclusion

The above information provides a basic overview of some of key GA metrics and is really just the start to being able to effectively analyse and adjust your website content and/or marketing campaigns to maximise performance. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on digital@mrtb.com.au