

L♥VES DATA



# Google Analytics 4

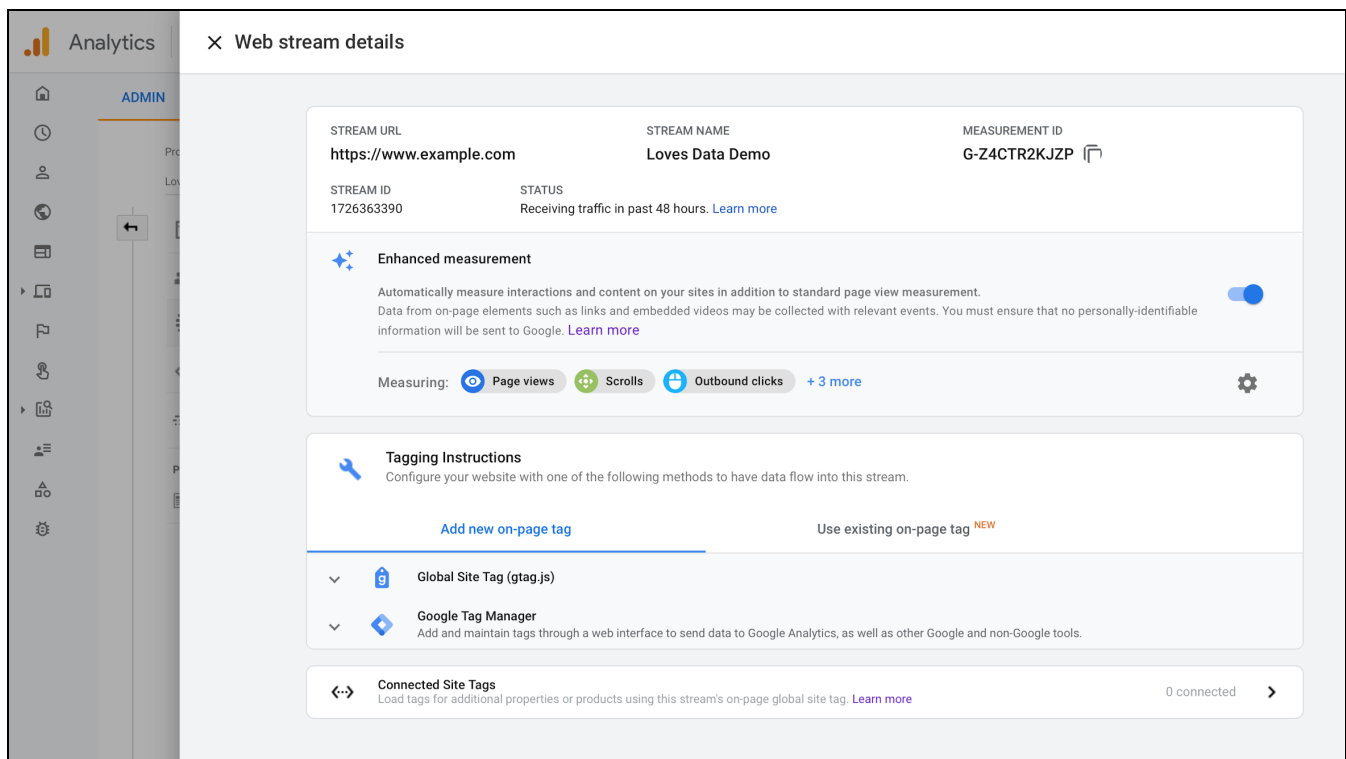
*Guide to Google Analytics 4 properties by Benjamin Mangold*

## Overview

Google Analytics 4 properties (or GA4 for short) were previously called *App + Web properties*. They let you combine data from websites and apps in a single set of reports. This allows you to unlock cross-platform reporting and analysis. Google Analytics 4 properties also give you access to new data collection and reporting options that are not available in the standard version of Google Analytics (called *Universal Analytics*).

## Getting Started

You can create a new Google Analytics 4 property by navigating to 'Admin', clicking 'Create Property'. Once your new property has been created, you can collect data into your reports using your existing tag (if you are using the gtag.js tracking code) or by creating a new tag.



If you're already tracking your website into a standard Google Analytics property, then you should continue to collect data into the existing property. You can then adjust your implementation to track users on your website into a Google Analytics 4 property at the same time. This can be achieved by selecting the 'Upgrade' option in the admin area.

## Differences

Unless you're only looking to track an app, then you should consider sending data into both types of properties. This lets you access all of the benefits provided by each type of property in Google Analytics and ensure data integrity for any existing properties.

Here's a comparison of standard (Universal Analytics) properties and Google Analytics 4:

	Universal Analytics	Google Analytics 4
<b>Standard reports</b>	Yes	Limited
<b>Custom reports</b>	Limited	Yes
<b>Permanent filters</b>	Yes	Limited
<b>Automatic tracking</b>	No	Yes
<b>Adjust attribution</b>	No	Limited
<b>Cross-domain tracking</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Integrate with Google Ads</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Integrate with BigQuery</b>	Paid	Free
<b>Integrate with other Google products</b>	Yes	No
<b>Data import</b>	Yes	No
<b>Google Data Studio connector</b>	Yes	Limited
<b>Temporary filters</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Segmentation</b>	Yes	Yes

**Please note:** Features and limits in Google Analytics 4 properties can change without notice.

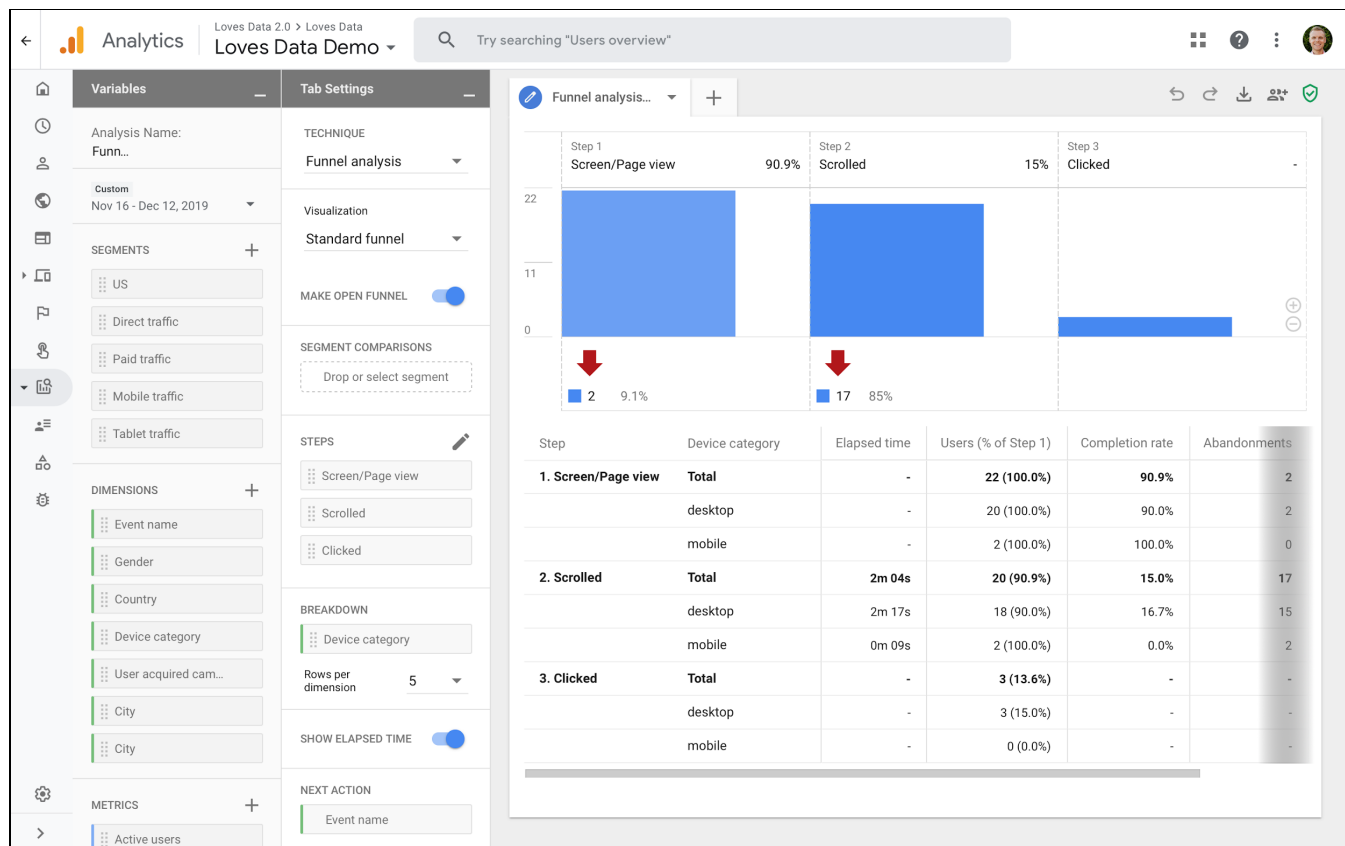
## Reports

Google Analytics 4 properties provide flexible, custom reporting options, while standard properties provide more pre-configured reports for your audience, marketing, content and conversions.

The pre-configured reports available in Google Analytics 4 include:

- **Home:** provides a top-level overview of your users, including a number of key metrics. The report also includes automated insights for the data that's been collected using Google's machine learning.
- **Realtime:** lets you view current user activity on your website or app, including the number of users in the last 30 minutes.
- **Acquisition:** these reports show you how people are finding your website or app. For example, you can see the source and medium people use to find your website.
- **Engagement:** lets you report on the pages people view on your website (or the screens in your app). The reports also include new metrics, like 'Engaged Sessions' which let you understand if people view more than one page or spend more than 10 seconds on your website.
- **Monetization:** if you sell items on your website, accept payments in your app, or monetize your content with ads, then you will find these details in the monetization reports.
- **Retention:** provides cohort reports for your users allowing you to see how often people return to engage with your website or app.
- **Demographics:** these reports let you view the geographic location of your users, along with other demographic information like age, gender, and interests.
- **Technology:** lets you view details about the different devices people are using. If you're tracking a website and an app, then you can also see a breakdown based on the platforms you're measuring.
- **All events:** provides a list of all the events that have been tracked into Google Analytics. You can also modify, create and manage events using the options available in the report.

Apart from the default reports, you can create custom reports in Google Analytics 4. To create your own reports and visualizations, open your reports and navigate to 'Analysis' and then 'Analysis Hub'.



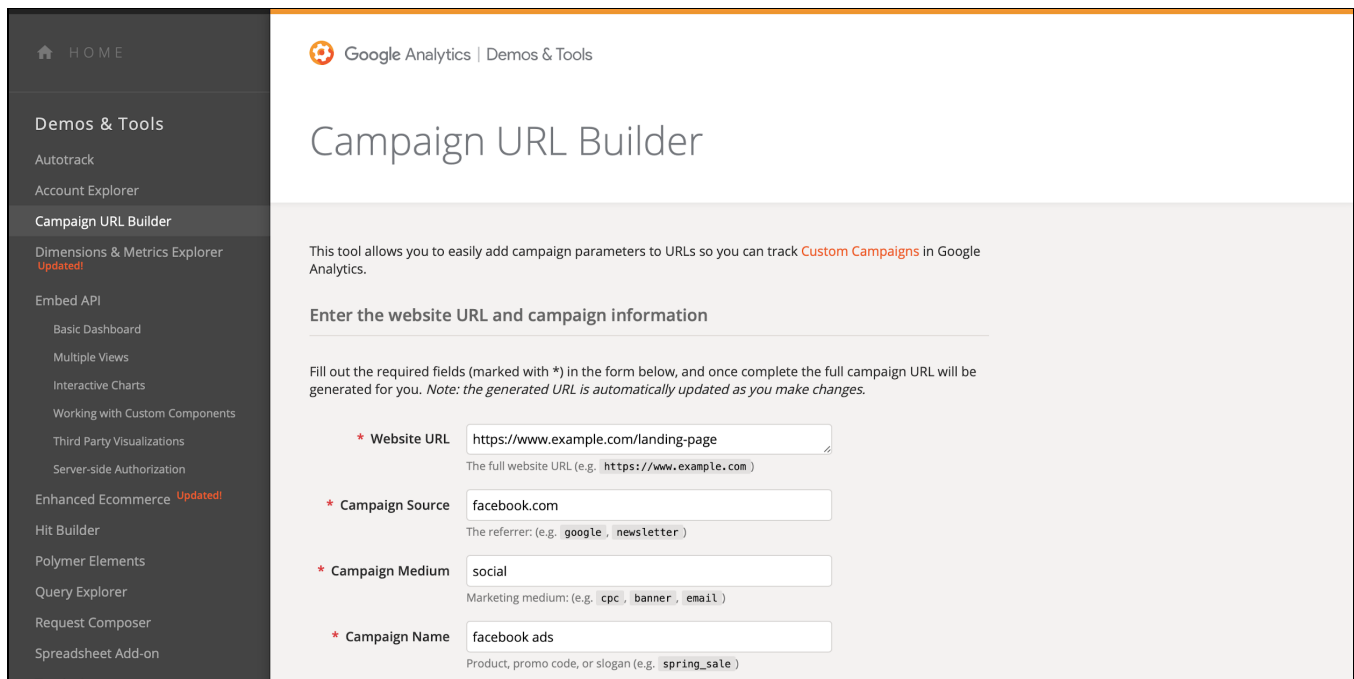
Custom reporting options include:

- **Exploration:** allows you to create reports for your analysis using tables, donut charts, line charts, scatter charts and geographic maps.
- **Segment Overlap:** lets you create and select multiple audience segments to compare them and see where there are overlaps. Segments can be created based on users, sessions or events.
- **Funnel Analysis:** lets you create ad-hoc funnel visualizations. You can create a 'Standard Funnel' which shows how users are completing steps or a 'Trended Funnel', which allows you to see trends for each funnel step. You also have the option of selecting 'Make Open Funnel', which will include people entering the funnel at any step.
- **Path Analysis:** lets you see how people travel through your website and app with a tree graph, similar to what you would find in the flow-style reports in a standard reporting view.
- **User Explorer:** allows you to drill-down to view individual user actions and segment your users.
- **Cohort Analysis:** group users based on the dates they visited your website or used your app.

- **User Lifetime:** provides access to metrics that include all available data for your users. For example, you can use the report to see the total dollar value generated by your users, even if transactions or conversion with a value occurred outside of the current date range.

## Campaign Tracking

The way you track campaigns is the same whether you are sending data into a Google Analytics 4 property, a standard property, or both. Apply campaign tags to the inbound links you are using and Google Analytics will report on campaign performance.



The screenshot shows the 'Campaign URL Builder' tool in Google Analytics. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with options like 'HOME', 'Demos & Tools', 'Autotrack', 'Account Explorer', 'Campaign URL Builder' (highlighted), 'Dimensions & Metrics Explorer', 'Embed API', 'Enhanced Ecommerce', 'Hit Builder', 'Polymer Elements', 'Query Explorer', 'Request Composer', and 'Spreadsheet Add-on'. The main content area is titled 'Campaign URL Builder' and includes a description: 'This tool allows you to easily add campaign parameters to URLs so you can track Custom Campaigns in Google Analytics.' Below this is a section 'Enter the website URL and campaign information' with a note: 'Fill out the required fields (marked with \*) in the form below, and once complete the full campaign URL will be generated for you. Note: the generated URL is automatically updated as you make changes.' The form contains four fields: 'Website URL' (https://www.example.com/landing-page), 'Campaign Source' (facebook.com), 'Campaign Medium' (social), and 'Campaign Name' (facebook ads). Each field has a small icon and a placeholder text below it.

## Attribution

Unlike standard properties, Google Analytics 4 properties let you change the attribution model used for your reports. Currently, the options are limited. However, these are likely to increase in the future. Navigate to 'Conversions' and then select a conversion action, you will then be able to adjust the attribution model used for the report (look for the option to customize the report on the top right corner – it's an icon of a chart with a pencil).

## Data Model

A flexible data model lets you name, classify and send any data you like to Google Analytics. Instead of being limited to pre-defined classifications, like pageviews, events and transactions, you have the option of using custom naming conventions for your reports.

## Wrap Up

If you're already using a standard property or you're looking to track your website for the first time – my current recommendation is to implement a Google Analytics 4 property and a standard property simultaneously. This unlocks all of the reporting options available in Google Analytics and gives you access to the latest features.

Are you using a Google Analytics 4 property? I'd love to hear from you! You can contact me at [hello@lovesdata.com](mailto:hello@lovesdata.com) – I'm looking forward to hearing how you're using Google Analytics.

And when you're ready to learn more about Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager and other important tools, join me in my courses. You can find details at <https://lovesdata.co/3mYR8>

– Benjamin

