

Fun with Analytics

Chapter 2: Blogalytics

Introduction

Welcome to Fun with Analytics. If you've come across this material on its own – it has two homes – one is a site where you can download copies of the chapters or read them online, at <http://tinyurl.com/casa-mktg> - the other is a LinkedIn Group, Learning Google Analytics, where you can discuss the material and ask questions: <http://tinyurl.com/learning-ga>

In This Chapter

This chapter is a basic recipe to get started in analytics, to take the first step in being able to track web traffic and see what they're up to. We'll create a simple blog, start a Google Analytics account, and connect the two, and discuss things along the way. The goal is to make a simple, relevant way to start exploring analytics.

Create a Google Account/Gmail address

Google has a lot of free tools that make it easier to work with content, and when you have a Google Account, it just makes it easier to sign in to all the tools.

So as a first step, I recommend creating a free Google Account by going to <http://mail.google.com> and clicking "Create Account".

Start a Blog

In this section we'll start a basic blog. (If you haven't read it already, you may also want to read chapter 2 of the Social Media Marketing Primer, also available at <http://tinyurl.com/casa-mktg> - it has a focus on some of the helpful tools you can use to create basic content, including a blog.)

To get started, visit <http://www.blogger.com>, and either sign in with your Google account, or click the "create an account" link at the bottom.



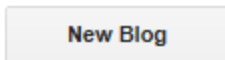
One account. All of Google.

Sign in to continue to Blogger

A sign-in form with a grey background. At the top is a circular icon representing a person. Below it are two input fields: "Email" and "Password". A blue button labeled "Sign in" is positioned below the password field. At the bottom left, there is a checked checkbox labeled "Stay signed in". To the right of the checkbox is a link labeled "Need help?".

[Create an account](#)

Then on the blogger site, click the New Blog button.

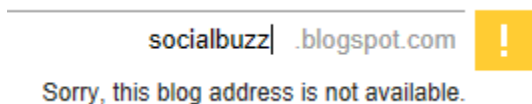


For practice, I wouldn't be too concerned with the title – you can change it later easily, and you can also create/delete blogs easily. But feel free to try "Social Media Perspective" as a title.

Blogs List > Create a new blog

Title	<input type="text" value="Social Media Perspective"/>
Address	<input type="text" value=""/> .blogspot.com You can add a custom domain later.

The title is simply what appears visually at the top of the blog. The "Address" is the opportunity Google gives you to have a custom address. Because it's a free tool, you might have to experiment a bit until you find one that's available. Type in ideas in the Address field, and see what happens:



What you're doing is coming up with the custom portion of the address that your blog will be at.

socialbuzznews| .blogspot.com ✓
This blog address is available.

So it turns out for our example, the address socialbuzznews.blogspot.com is available.

So the link for the blog would be <http://socialbuzznews.blogspot.com>

NOTE: You'll want to make a note of this link to your blog, to use when you start a Google Analytics account later in this chapter.







Then after you have chosen a title and address, you can choose a template, for the look and feel of the blog, which you can also change later:

Blogs List > Create a new blog

Title

Address ✓
This blog address is available.

Template

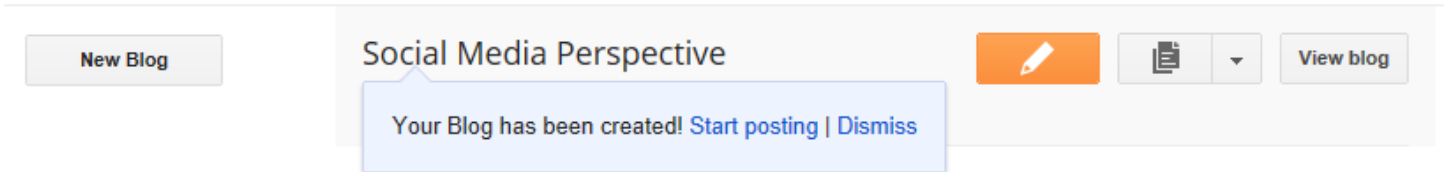
 Simple	 Dynamic Views	 Picture Window
 Awesome Inc.	 Watermark	 Ethereal

You can browse many more templates and customize your blog later.

After you've selected one (I recommend starting with "Simple"), click the Create blog! Button.

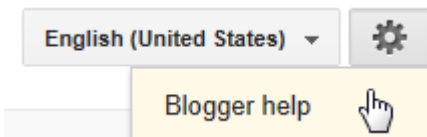
With these simple steps, you've created a blog and you can start blogging!

Your mission if you should choose to accept it is to make a sample post, and then share the link on Facebook, or via email with someone.

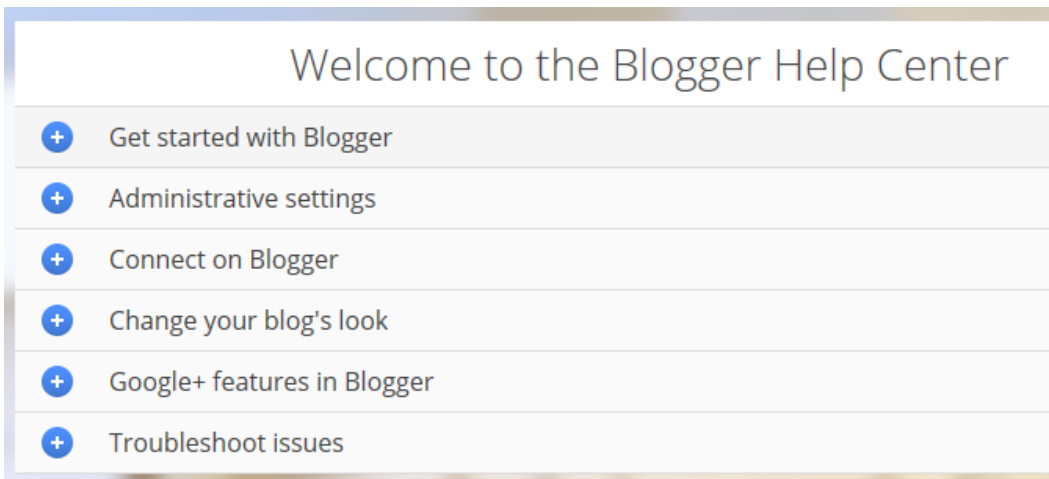


P.S. One way to “cheat” if you forget the link for your blog, is to click on the View blog button (See screenshot above), which will open up the blog in your browser. Then you can copy the link from the address field and paste it into Facebook, or an email, etc.

To learn more about Blogger, access the settings menu (the little gear icon) when you’re signed into Blogger, and select “Blogger Help”:



There’s a variety of helpful articles:



And you can always go directly with this link:

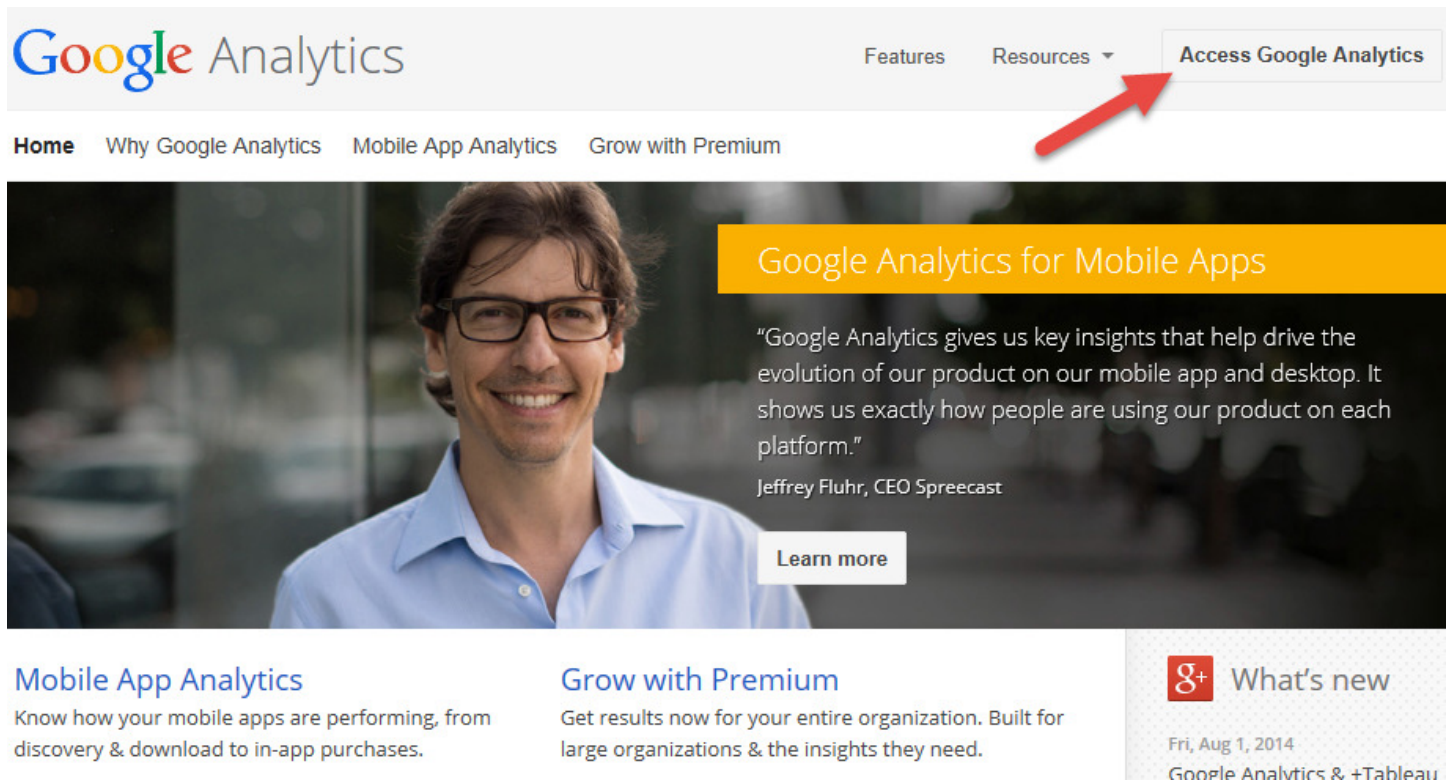
<https://support.google.com/blogger>

Start a Google Analytics Account

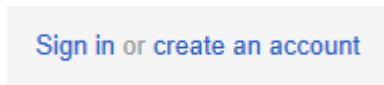
The next step is to create a Google Analytics account, by going to:

<http://www.google.com/analytics/>

If you're already signed into Gmail/Google, there will be an Access Google Analytics button:



Otherwise you can click Sign in, and sign in with your Gmail/Google account, or click “create an account”:



That's the sign in process. Once you're signed in as a Google User, you should get a page like this, where you can click the Sign up button to create your Google Analytics account:

Start analyzing your site's traffic in 3 steps

1 Sign up for Google Analytics



All we need is some basic info about what site you'd like to monitor.

2 Add tracking code



You'll get a tracking code to paste onto your pages so Google knows when your site is visited.

3 Learn about your audience



In a few hours you'll be able to start seeing data about your site.

Start using Google Analytics

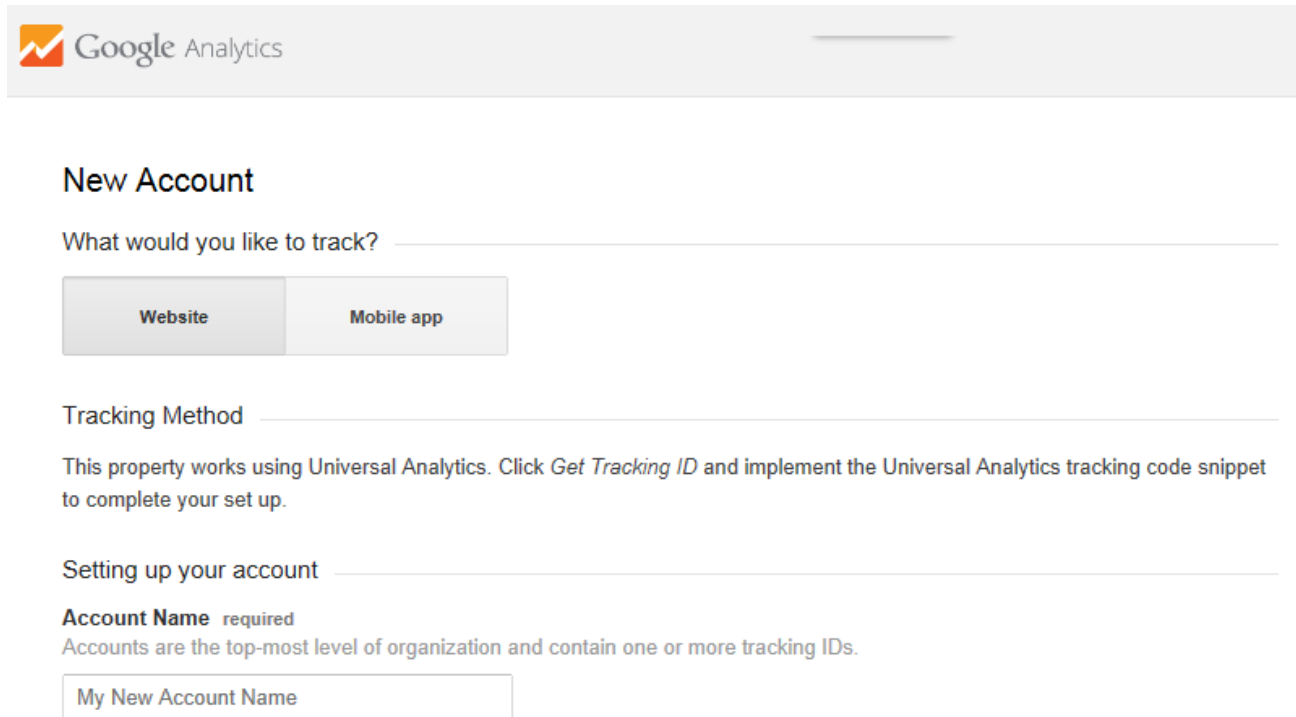
Sign up

Sign up now, it's easy and free!

Still have questions? [Help Center](#)

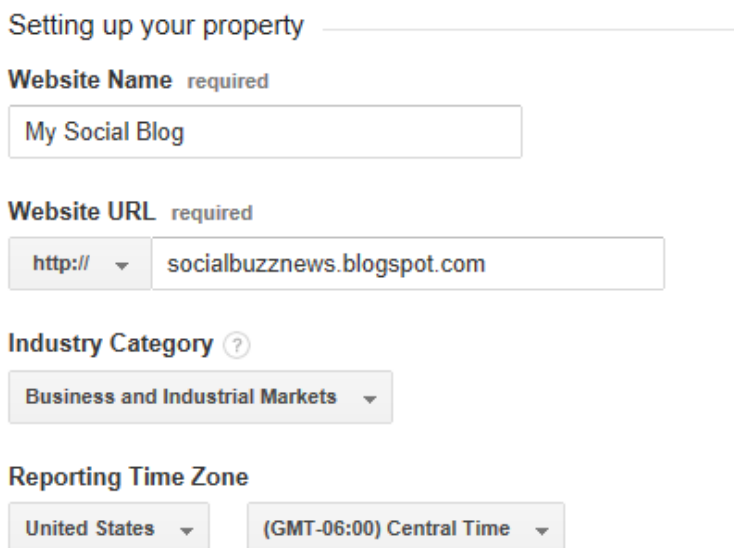
Google Analytics defaults to creating an account around Websites, but if you're interested in mobile marketing, at some point you might like to explore the idea of developing an app, and integrating Google Analytics directly within the app.

To begin, type in an account name – it might be your name, the name of your organization, or something like “Learning Analytics”; it really doesn't matter:



The screenshot shows the Google Analytics 'New Account' setup page. At the top left is the Google Analytics logo. Below it is the heading 'New Account'. A question 'What would you like to track?' is followed by two buttons: 'Website' (which is selected) and 'Mobile app'. Below this is the 'Tracking Method' section, which states 'This property works using Universal Analytics. Click *Get Tracking ID* and implement the Universal Analytics tracking code snippet to complete your set up.' The next section is 'Setting up your account', which includes a required field for 'Account Name' with the placeholder text 'My New Account Name'. A note below the field states 'Accounts are the top-most level of organization and contain one or more tracking IDs.'

Next, you set up a “property” – whenever you add a new site or blog for Google Analytics to track, it's considered a “property”. This is where you need to paste in the address for your blog, if you're following along:



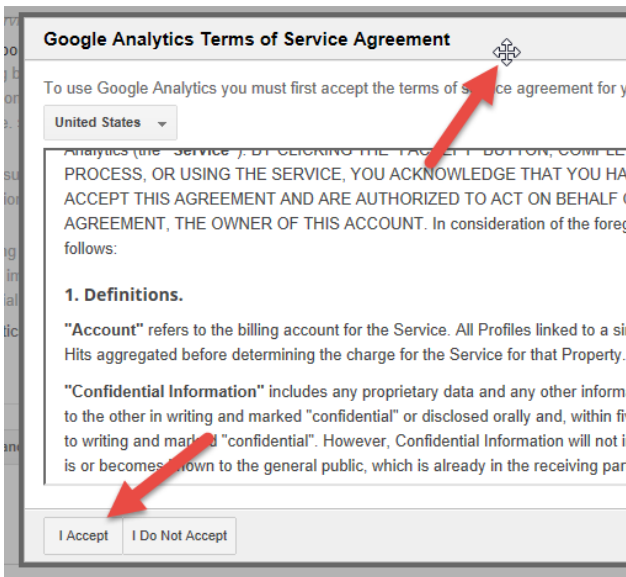
The screenshot shows the 'Setting up your property' section of the Google Analytics setup page. It includes several required fields: 'Website Name' with the placeholder 'My Social Blog'; 'Website URL' with a dropdown set to 'http://' and the text 'socialbuzznews.blogspot.com'; 'Industry Category' with a dropdown set to 'Business and Industrial Markets'; and 'Reporting Time Zone' with two dropdowns set to 'United States' and '(GMT-06:00) Central Time'.

Then click Get Tracking ID:

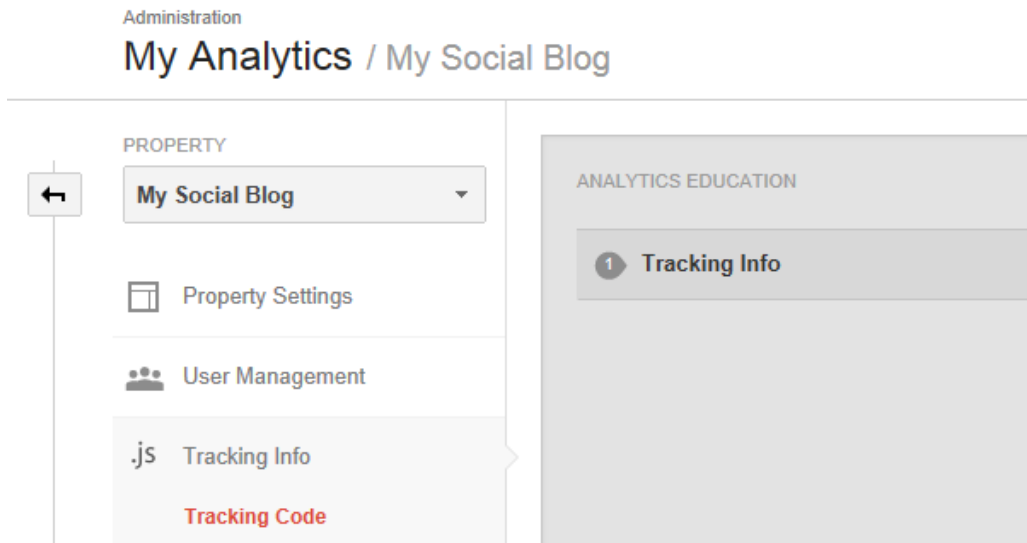


Tracking IDs are basically codes that Google gives you to place on your site or blog, so that the site can “talk” to Google. The ID is unique for every site/blog you set up. It’s a one time, thing, and you end up taking it “back” to your site, in order to set up the connection.

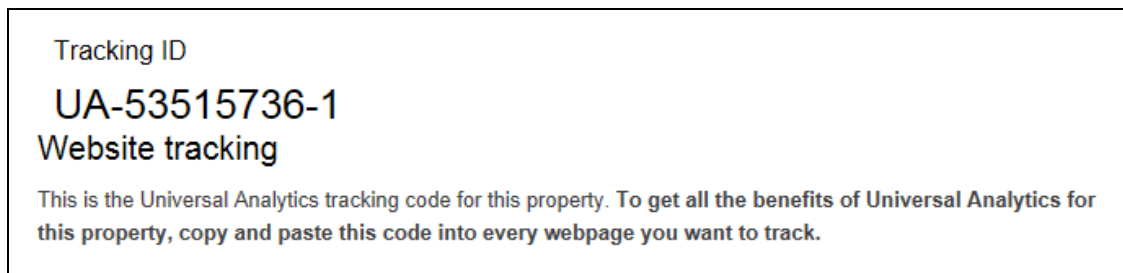
Next, click the “I Accept” button at the bottom of the “Agreement”. You might need to roll your mouse over the top of this window until it becomes four arrows, click and drag it up, in order to see the I Accept button.



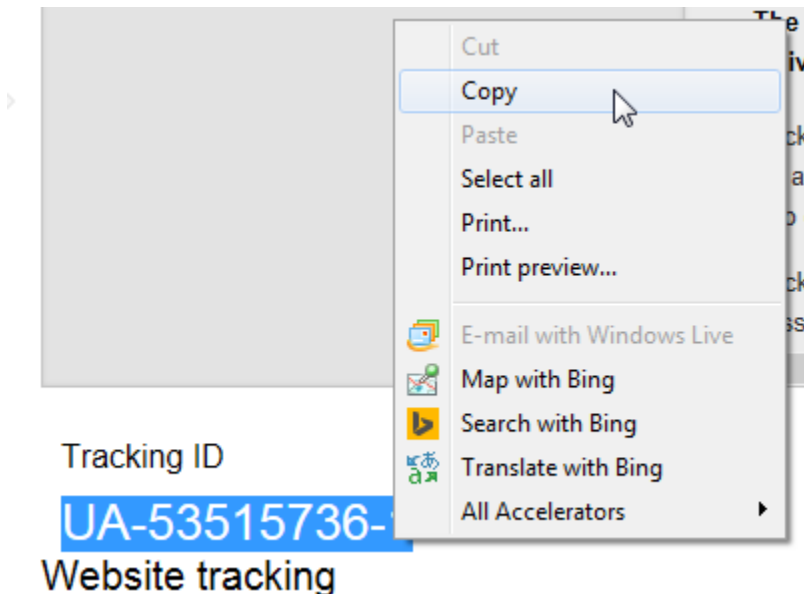
Then, Google Analytics should open up with a page, based on the name you gave to your site or blog:



So you can scroll down until you see the Tracking ID:



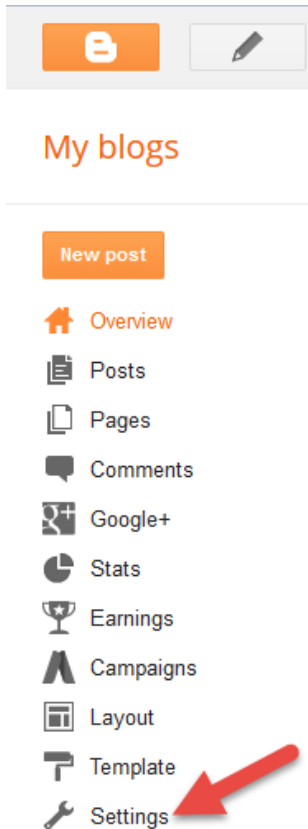
Then just select it (ex: “UA-53515736-1”, right-click (Windows) or CTRL+click (Mac), and copy:



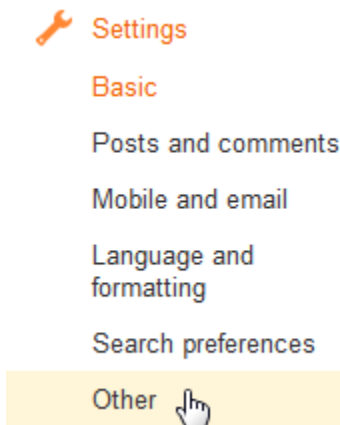
Even if you copy this code into memory (for pasting into Blogger), I recommend making a note of it somewhere.

Connect Google Analytics to Blogger

Now that you've created a Google Analytics account, and generated a tracking code, you can go back to your blog, and click Settings:



Under Settings, click Other:



And find the section that says “Google Analytics”:

Google Analytics

Analytics Web Property ID ?

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Take that marvelous tracking code you copied before (from *your* site or blog):

Tracking ID

UA-53515736-1

Website tracking

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And paste it into the Analytics Web Property ID field:

Google Analytics

Analytics Web Property ID ?

UA-53515736-1

Then click Save settings:

Save settings

Taking a Look in Google Analytics

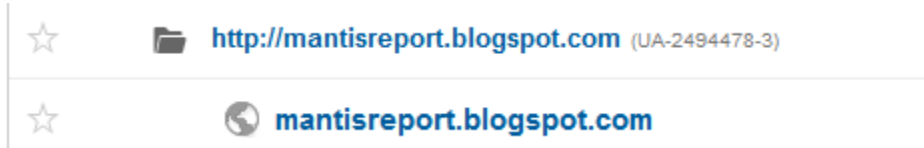
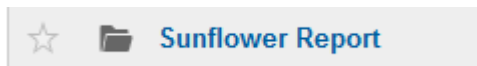
In theory, it should now be connected. It can take 24 hours for anything to happen, but in the meantime, I suggest making a post on your blog, and sharing it with friends on Facebook as a test. (Ex: tell them you're learning about social media marketing or analytics, etc. – and feel free to include the link for the free learning material – <http://tinyurl.com/casa-mktg>). Also if you joined the LinkedIn Group – <http://tinyurl.com/learning-ga> - feel free to post your blog there, to get some “clicks”.

All you really need at this point is a few clicks on your blog, just to test things out a bit.

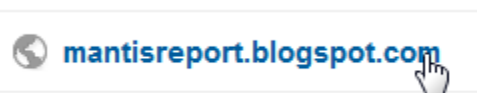
In order to see how things are going, go to <http://www.google.com/analytics>, sign-in, etc., and click on Home:



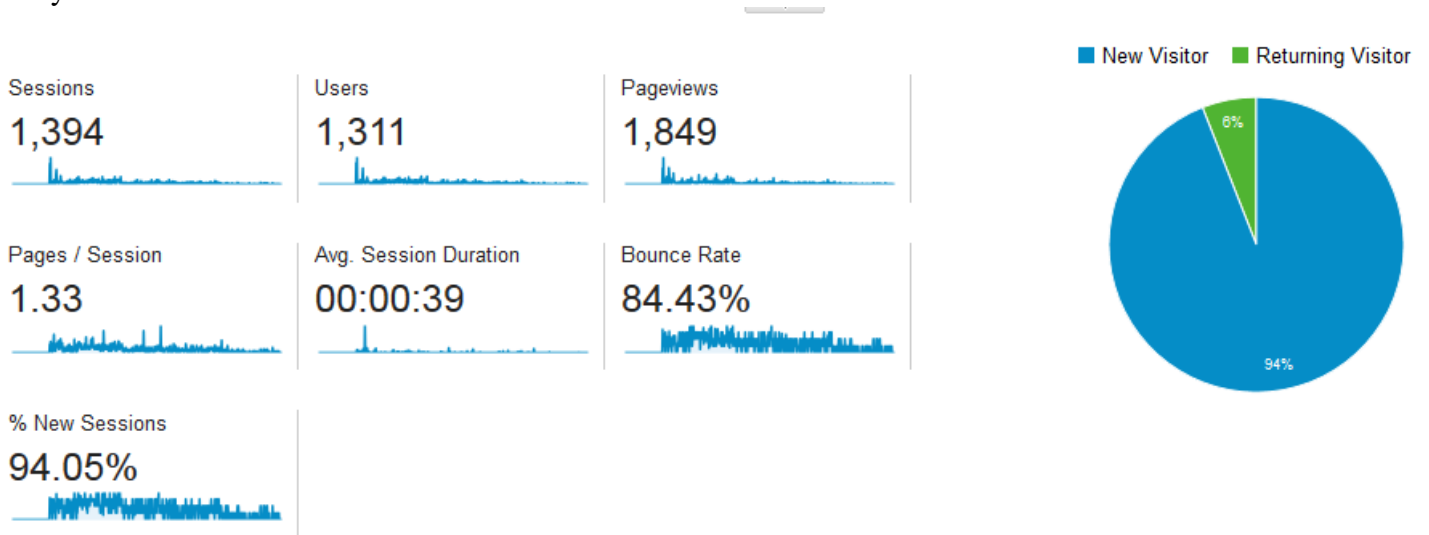
You should have a section on your Google Analytics page, based on how you named your Google Analytics account, then with the name of your site, and finally a little globe icon with your site:



To see how things are going, click on your “property”:



In theory, you should see something like this, and this is the kind of thing we'll be learning about. This is Web analytics:

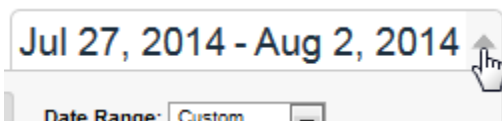


At a very basic level, what programs like Google Analytics seek to give you is a sense of your website's performance – that is, how many people visit, their behavior on the site.

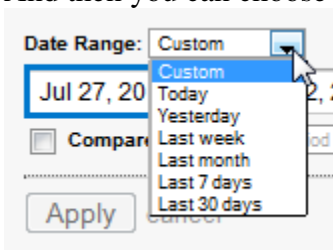
Using a simple example like we're doing is a good start, and ultimately what most Web analytics tools help you to do is to actually track revenue or "goals", such as people visiting and then actually purchasing, or signing up for something.

To scratch the surface, after you generate some data, over time, one feature to keep in mind about analytics programs is the way you set a date range.

In Google Analytics, you can click on the arrow to the right of the "default" date:



And then you can choose several "pre-sets":

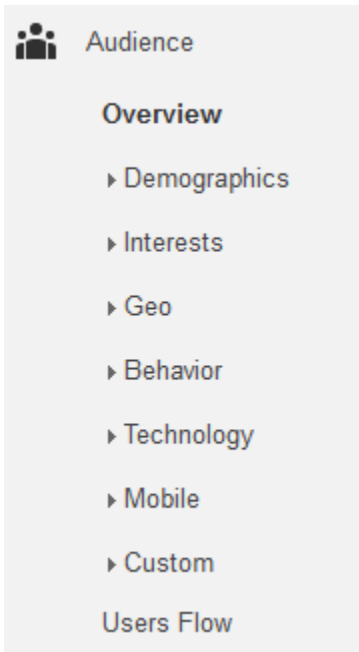


The general purpose of these kinds of date ranges is in situations where you are regularly looking at Google Analytics, and maybe reviewing how things are going on a regular basis. So in analytics, you are often "looking back", and looking for trends. Are the visits increasing? Did a particular campaign have a good effect? Things like this.

When you set a new date range, then you need to click Apply:

A rectangular button with rounded corners and a thin border, containing the word "Apply" in a simple sans-serif font.

You might like to review some other sections in Google Analytics on the left-hand side – in some cases, you need to be gathering data for awhile for this to generate meaningful information. But it's interesting to see the kinds of things you can track:



Learning More

If you're eager to learn more about Google Analytics, the Help Center has some good introductory material: <https://support.google.com/analytics/?hl=en#topic=3544906>

These resources may also be of interest:

“Analytics takes 24 hours to kick in, so wait a day before checking your stats. Analytics only counts stats from the date it was installed, so you will need to wait a month before being able to see reliable monthly stats.”
<http://www.lacquerheadsfoz.com/2013/04/how-to-install-google-analytics-on.html>

How To Add Google Analytics To Blogger 2014
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0F7jCovhpQ>

Google Analytics Free vs Premium
<http://www.google.com/analytics/>

Conclusion/Discussion

So – congratulations on setting things up!

I think the reason analytics can be fun is when you can “see under the hood” of a website, and look at how many people are visiting. If you’ve used Facebook, it’s like seeing how many people “like” your post or page, but analytics takes it from a single item, to a fuller picture of what’s going on.

In order to have fun, the next step is to get some traffic to your blog or site. One thing you can do is write a blog post and share it wherever you can think of to get some clicks, including the LinkedIn Group – <http://tinyurl.com/learning-ga>

And you might also want to consider regularly blogging on your exploration of online marketing and analytics, such as making a blog post once a week, to see what it’s like to get traffic over time. Feel free to read the Social Media Marketing primer to learn more.

In the next chapter, we’ll try two related techniques to “jumpstart” things to get some traffic to analyze in Google Analytics.

Invitation

You are welcome to visit and join the LinkedIn Group at <http://tinyurl.com/learning-ga> - if you want to come on and say “huh?” or if you would like to set me straight on something, or just have some feedback.

Remember, there are NO DUMB QUESTIONS. If you have the question, someone else surely also did.