Google Analytics is the preferred platform for web analytics at the university. The University Marketing team manages the Google 360 product and ecosystem for the institution. Marketers and developers at the institution are not permitted to utilize the free version of the tool and should work with University Marketing to onboard their properties.

Data in Google Analytics is built around many metrics plus dimensions by which those metrics can be reported upon.

- Metrics are the numeric values or measures of things within your web or app experience. A set of standard metrics is included within Google Analytics. Advanced users can create custom metrics within Google Analytics and Google Data Studio.
- Dimensions are descriptive qualifiers to understand more about your metrics. A set of standard dimensions is also included within Google Analytics. Advanced users can also create custom dimensions to utilize for further analysis of their data.

Through the use of the Global Container via Google Tag Manager, marketers at Ohio State have access to a full suite of events to measure on-site interactions and support goal measurement. Event is a type of hit within Google Analytics used to track user interactions with content on a website. Events are created by developers or marketers to serve your measurement needs.

For goals and events to work properly, we rely on university partners to implement event tagging on their sites or utilize specific terms in form or confirmation URLs. The Global Container is a Google Tag Manager container managed by the University Marketing team to support holistic and consistent measurement of websites at Ohio State via Google Analytics. Site owners with the global container on their site will receive change information two weeks prior to elements being altered or added to the container.

**What we capture**

Elements captured about a visit:

- Who visited
- How they arrived at the site
- What device the session took place on
- Location of IP address

Elements captured during a session by page viewed:

- Visited a page
- Clicked to play a video
- Watched a video to the end
- Downloaded a file
- Shared a page from the site to their social networks
- Clicked an outbound link (link doesn’t contain osu.edu)
- Dismissed the drift chatbot
- Started a chat with the drift chatbot
- Started an online gift
- Completed an online gift
- Clicked to send an email
- Clicked to make a phone call
- Completed a form to subscribe/signup for a newsletter

Dashboard Orientation

Page menu is on your left

Date range selector is in the top right

Subdomain selector is also in the top right if you want to limit the report to just one of your sites (for those that have more than one)

Percent change reflected on this dashboard is year-over-year. Seasonality significantly impacts performance on websites in the higher education space. You will likely see the highest traffic to your sites in September, October, November and January. Sometimes March and May can be high traffic months as well. Most lines of business at the institution follow this pattern, except for our healthcare sites.

Tables and charts can be downloaded by right clicking on the element.

If you see arrows in the top right of a table, you can ‘drill down’ into the next level of information.

Page 1: Traffic Basics

Traffic basics show how many users and pages are being accessed and how they got there. Increase/decrease percentages based on year-over-year performance.

Channel traffic refers to how traffic arrived at your site.

- Referral traffic is traffic that came from another website (not in the osu.edu domain)
- Organic search means that someone arrived on our website from a search engine, ie Google or Bing
- Direct traffic is any traffic that lands on the site without a source (untagged email/short links or bookmarks).

Campaigns are marketing tools designed to drive traffic to your website. They ‘show up’ in analytics when you actively label your inbound links with the appropriate parameters. If you’re sending an email promoting your site content, for example, be sure to utilize UTM tags to ensure you have visibility into the volume of traffic that email is sending.

We’ve established a common tagging protocol for the university — and developed the resources below to save you time. Ensure marketing tactics sending traffic to osu.edu sites have appropriate tags appended to URLs to support downstream evaluation of that tactic’s capabilities in driving on-site
behaviors. These tags can also be used in the personalization of web content for the tactic audience, support retargeting efforts and drive elements of centralized reporting.

To start tagging quickly, use our interactive URL builder.

To get familiar with all the in's and out's and options, explore more details on the university standards, including examples.

Things to think about using this information

**Bounce rate**
After users land on your site, are they sticking around to engage with the page or explore additional content? A bounce only fires if a person does not trigger an event on their landing page or visit a second page after they land. If your bounce rate is up, you may have an issue.

TIP: Before filtering the dashboard for your sites using the hostname filter, note the bounce rate for the institution. It is typically between 45-60% depending on the time of year. Are you above or below the average? Have you improved year over year?

**Year-over-year traffic and users**
Are people continuing to use your website? You want to examine both sessions (number of unique visits starting on your site) and users (number of users that visited your site).

TIP: Don’t panic if you’re showing year-over-year decreases. Use the dashboard to look at general trends across websites or hostnames like your own. We may be seeing an general decrease in traffic as a domain. You can also dig into your channels to diagnose why. Did you run a paid media campaign or have a viral social media post last year, but not this year? If all other variables seem normal, start to identify ways to increase traffic to your most valuable pages.

Page 2: Content Basics

Content basics shows volume of key things that users access or view on the site. This includes things like top viewed pages, outbound link clicks, and file downloads. These elements are automatically captured via our analytics package – you do not have to do anything extra on your site.

Page 3: Page & Event Details

Page & event details highlights key actions being taken by visitors across the site and on specific pages. Note that bounce rate is only calculated based on volume of entrances, not total pageviews or unique pageviews.

The top table on this page shows basic use stats for your pages. Use the drill down arrow to see pages within a specific subdomain. If you choose a page by clicking on it, the events associated with that page will appear in the table below.
Page 4: Device & Browser Usage

Page for the development team to understand key measures by device and browser type. Use the top table to filter the lower table. Understand basic metrics by device and browser, including page speed for popular browsers.