Basics of Search Engine Optimization & Content Creation in CRM

Lecture Title: Google Analytics for SEO

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Undergraduate Diploma in Digital Marketing

Google Analytics for SEO

Google Analytics is a powerful web analytics service that tracks and reports website traffic, offering insights into user behaviour, acquisition sources, and the effectiveness of your online content and marketing strategies.

Understanding its interface and basic features can help you optimise your website and improve user experiences.

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Interface Overview

Upon logging into Google Analytics, you'll typically land on the Home dashboard, which provides a summary of key metrics for your site. The interface is organised into several main sections, accessible from the left-hand navigation menu:

1. Realtime: Shows what's happening on your site in real-time, including current active users, their geographic locations, and the pages they're viewing.

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Interface Overview

2. Audience: Provides detailed reports about your site visitors, including demographics (age, gender), interests, geography, behaviour (new vs returning, frequency, engagement), technology (browser, OS, network), mobile (devices), and more.

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Interface Overview

3. Acquisition: Offers insights into how users find your website, detailing traffic sources such as organic search, direct, social, referrals, and paid search. This section helps you understand which channels are most effective at driving traffic.

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Interface Overview

4. Behaviour: Focuses on how users interact with your site, including the pages they visit, the content they engage with, and their navigation path through the site. Features like Site Content, Site Speed, and Site Search reports fall under this category.

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Interface Overview

5. Conversions: Tracks how well your site achieves its goals, which can include sales, lead generation, or other desired actions. You can set up goals and track conversions, evaluating the effectiveness of your website and marketing efforts.

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How To Create a Google Analytics 4 Account

Google Analytics

SURFSIDE PPC

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Basic Features

Dashboards: Customizable views that allow you to create an overview of the reports most relevant to your needs.

Shortcuts: This lets you save quick access links to your most frequently used reports.

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Basic Features

Intelligence Events: An AI feature that automatically detects statistical anomalies in your data and can alert you to potential issues or opportunities.

Custom Reports: Enables the creation of reports tailored to the specific information you want to track beyond the default reports available.

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Basic Features

Segments: Allows you to isolate and analyse subsets of your data.

For example, you might look at the behaviour of users from a

specific country or those who visited a particular page.

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Basic Features

Goals and Conversions: Essential for tracking the effectiveness of your marketing efforts, allowing you to measure how often users complete specific actions.

Event Tracking: This can be set up to track interactions within your site that don't correspond to a pageview, such as downloads, video plays, and clicks on external links.

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Grow with Google
Data at Work
Case Study

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

GA4 represents a significant shift from Universal Analytics (UA), offering a more user-centric, event-based data model that provides deeper insights into user behaviour across websites and apps.

GA4's advanced metrics and features can significantly influence and inform SEO strategies in various ways.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

1. Enhanced User Engagement Insights

Impact: GA4 focuses on user engagement, offering metrics like engagement rate, engagement time, and engaged sessions.

SEO Strategy: By understanding what content keeps users engaged, SEO professionals can optimise content strategies to focus on topics and formats that increase user engagement, potentially improving rankings and visibility.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

2. Event Tracking Without Additional Code

Impact: GA4 allows for the tracking of specific interactions as events without needing additional code, making it easier to measure actions like file downloads, video plays, or link clicks.

SEO Strategy: This detailed event tracking can help identify which on-page elements contribute most to user engagement and conversion, allowing for targeted on-page SEO optimisations.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

3. Cross-Platform Tracking

Impact: GA4 provides a unified view of user behaviour across websites and apps, offering insights into the multi-platform journey of users.

SEO Strategy: Understanding the pathway users take from app to website (or vice versa) can inform content optimisation and keyword strategies that bridge the gap between different platforms, enhancing overall SEO performance.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

4. Improved Conversion Modeling with Machine Learning

Impact: GA4 uses machine learning to fill in data gaps where tracking might be blocked or missing, providing a more complete picture of conversions.

SEO Strategy: SEO strategies can be refined based on more accurate conversion data, focusing efforts on channels and content that drive the most valuable outcomes.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

5. More Granular User Data

Impact: The user-centric approach of GA4, including user lifetime value and more detailed user acquisition reports, offers deeper insights into how users find and interact with a site over time.

SEO Strategy: By analysing the channels and content that attract high-value users, SEO efforts can be tailored to target similar audiences, improving both acquisition and retention.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

6. Predictive Metrics

Impact: GA4 introduces predictive metrics, such as purchase probability and churn probability, which forecast user actions based on past behaviour.

SEO Strategy: These insights can guide content creation and optimisation, targeting users with high purchase probability and creating retention strategies for those with high churn probability.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

7. Customizable Reporting

Impact: GA4's flexible and customisable reporting allows for the creation of reports tailored to specific SEO goals and metrics.

SEO Strategy: Custom reports can be created to monitor the performance of SEO-focused changes, enabling continuous refinement of strategies based on real-time data.

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GA4 Implementation for SEO

To leverage GA4's metrics for informing SEO strategies, it's essential to:

Set up GA4 alongside Universal Analytics to start collecting data and familiarising yourself with the new interface and features.

Regularly review GA4 reports focusing on engagement, conversion, and acquisition to identify trends and opportunities for SEO optimisation.

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GA4 Implementation for SEO

Use GA4's event tracking capabilities to measure the impact of on-page elements and user interactions on SEO performance.

Experiment with predictive metrics to anticipate user behaviour and adjust content and keyword strategies accordingly.

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Build a GA4 dashboard

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Understanding How Visitors Arrive at Your Website

Understanding how visitors arrive at a website is crucial for tailoring marketing strategies and optimising channels for better engagement and conversion.

The main channels through which visitors arrive at a website are organic search, direct traffic, referrals, and social media.

Let's delve into each with examples from real case studies:

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Understanding How Visitors Arrive at Your Website

1. Organic Search

Description: Visitors come from search engine results when they search for keywords related to your website.

Example: Moz, an SEO tool provider, significantly increased its organic traffic by focusing on high-quality content that addressed specific user queries related to SEO. Through detailed blog posts, guides, and the "Whiteboard Friday" video series, Moz capitalised on organic search to attract visitors seeking SEO knowledge, leading to increased subscriptions to their SEO tools.

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Understanding How Visitors Arrive at Your Website

2. Direct Traffic

Description: Visitors enter your website URL directly into their browser or use a bookmark. This often indicates brand awareness or returning visitors.

Example: Dropbox saw a significant increase in direct traffic as a result of its referral program, which incentivised users to invite friends in exchange for additional storage space. This word-of-mouth strategy not only boosted direct traffic but also enhanced brand awareness as existing users became brand ambassadors.

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Understanding How Visitors Arrive at Your Website

3. Referrals

Description: Visitors arrive from other websites that link to your site. This can include blogs, news sites, or any other external site that provides a link.

Example: Airbnb experienced growth in referral traffic through strategic partnerships and guest blog posts on travel-related websites. By offering compelling content and exclusive deals to partners' audiences, Airbnb leveraged referral traffic to attract new users looking for unique lodging options around the world.

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Understanding How Visitors Arrive at Your Website

4. Social Media

Description: Visitors come from social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn, where your website has been mentioned or linked.

Example: Glossier, a beauty brand, leveraged social media to drive traffic to its website by actively engaging with its community on platforms like Instagram and Twitter. By sharing user-generated content, hosting live Q&A sessions, and offering behind-the-scenes glimpses, Glossier used social media to create a loyal fanbase that frequently visited its site for the latest products and beauty tips.

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Integrating Insights into Strategy

SEO Optimization: For organic search traffic, focus on SEO strategies that target high-intent keywords and produce content that matches user search intent.

Brand Building: To increase direct traffic, invest in brand-building activities, such as memorable advertising, exceptional customer service, and easy-to-remember URLs.

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Integrating Insights into Strategy

Link Building & Partnerships: For referral traffic, create high-quality content that other websites want to link to and pursue guest posting opportunities or partnerships with complementary businesses.

Social Media Engagement: Enhance social media traffic by creating shareable content, engaging with your audience, and utilising platform-specific features (like Instagram Stories or LinkedIn articles) to drive interest and clicks to your website.

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Transitioning from UA to GA4

If you're transitioning from Universal Analytics to GA4, it's important to note the fundamental differences in how data is collected and reported, especially for behaviour analytics. Start by setting up basic event tracking in GA4, including page views, scrolls, and clicks, and then gradually expand to more complex events and conversion tracking as you become more familiar with the platform.

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GA4 Behavior Reports

 1. Events

Description: In GA4, everything is an event, from page views and button clicks to user engagements like video plays and file downloads. This allows for a more comprehensive understanding of user actions.

Customisation: You can create custom events to track specific interactions relevant to your business goals, providing flexibility in measuring user behaviour.

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GA4 Behavior Reports

2. Engagement

Engagement Overview: This report offers insights into user engagement metrics, such as engagement time, engagement rate, and engaged sessions. It helps identify how effectively your content captures user interest.

Engagement by Event: This tool analyses engagement based on specific events, enabling you to see which actions are most engaging to your users.

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GA4 Behavior Reports

3. Pages and Screens

Description: Shows the performance of individual pages (on a website) or screens (in an app), including views, unique views, and average engagement time. This report helps identify which content is most popular and engaging.

Path Analysis: A tool within this category that visualises the paths users take through your site or app, helping identify common navigation patterns and potential friction points.

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GA4 Behavior Reports

4. Conversions

Description: While not solely a behaviour report, understanding conversions is integral to analysing user behaviour. GA4 allows you to mark specific events as conversions, making it easy to see how user interactions lead to desired actions.

Conversion Paths: Analyze the sequences of events that lead to conversions, offering insights into user journeys and identifying effective touchpoints.

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Implementing Behavior Reports Insights:

To effectively use insights from Behavior Reports in GA4:

Optimise Content and User Experience: Use the Pages and Screens report to understand which content resonates with your audience. Improve or expand on popular topics and optimise the layout and user experience based on user navigation paths.

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Implementing Behavior Reports Insights:

Enhance Engagement: Analyze engagement metrics to refine content strategy, focusing on creating more of what keeps users engaged longer.

Custom Events for Deep Insights: Set up custom events to track interactions unique to your business, providing deeper insights into user behaviour and preferences.

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Implementing Behavior Reports Insights:

Conversion Optimization: Use the Conversions and Conversion Paths reports to understand how different behaviors contribute to conversions.

Based on these insights, optimise the user journey to improve conversion rates.

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SEO-Specific Reports:

In Google Analytics, especially with the transition to Google Analytics 4 (GA4), understanding user interactions with your website becomes pivotal for optimising content and enhancing user experience. Among the various reports available, **Google Search Queries/Search Console** and the **Landing Pages Report** provide valuable insights into how users find your website and interact with it.

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SEO-Specific Reports:

The Google Search Queries report (found in Universal Analytics as part of the integration with Google Search Console) shows the queries that users typed into Google Search to find your website. This report is invaluable for SEO as it helps you understand the keywords and phrases driving organic traffic to your site. In GA4, similar insights are obtained by linking Google Analytics with Google Search Console, allowing you to analyse search traffic alongside other analytics data.

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Key Metrics:

Query: The actual search term used by a visitor.

Clicks: How many times users clicked on your website's listing in the search results for a specific query.

Impressions: The number of times your site's listing was shown in search results for a specific query.

CTR (Click-Through Rate): The percentage of impressions that resulted in a click.

Average Position: The average ranking of your site's listing in the search results for a specific query.

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Class Exercise:

Imagine you run a blog about healthy eating.

In the Search Queries report, you notice that the query "**healthy breakfast ideas**" drives a significant number of clicks and has a high CTR, indicating strong interest.

However, "**healthy dinner recipes**" has many impressions but a low CTR, suggesting that your site's listing needs to be optimised for this query.

What steps do you take? Bring your answers to the next lecture.

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Landing Pages Report:

The Landing Pages report in Google Analytics provides data on the first pages that users land on when they visit your site.

This report helps identify which pages attract the most traffic and how effectively they engage users, offering insights into user behaviour and content performance.

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Key Metrics:

Landing Page: The URL of the first page a visitor sees during a session.

Sessions: The total number of sessions initiated on each landing page.

Bounce Rate: The percentage of single-page visits, indicating users who left your site from the landing page without browsing further.

Conversion Rate: For sites with set goals (like form submissions or purchases), the percentage of sessions on a landing page that resulted in a conversion.

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Example:

For the same healthy eating blog, the Landing Pages report shows that a post titled "**10 Quick Healthy Breakfast Ideas**" has the highest number of sessions and a low bounce rate, indicating it's not only attracting visitors but also engaging them effectively.

Conversely, another post, "**5 Healthy Dinner Recipes to Make Under 30 Minutes**," might have a higher bounce rate, signalling a need for content improvement or page optimisation to retain visitors.

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BONUS MATERIAL

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Google Products that Integrate with Google Analytics:

Google Ads

When you link Google Analytics with Google Ads, you can import Analytics goals and e-commerce transactions into your Ads account, see ad campaign data in Analytics, and use Analytics metrics like bounce rate and session duration to refine your Ads campaigns.

This integration helps optimise your advertising spend by more effectively targeting and retargeting based on user behaviour on your site.

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Google Products that Integrate with Google Analytics:

Google Search Console

Linking Google Analytics with Google Search Console (previously Webmaster Tools) allows you to see search query data directly in your Analytics reports. This includes impressions, clicks, CTR, and the average position of your pages in search results.

This information is invaluable for SEO, as it helps understand how users find your site in organic search and identify opportunities to improve search visibility and performance.

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Google Products that Integrate with Google Analytics:

Google AdSense

By connecting Google Analytics with Google AdSense, publishers can access detailed reports on how their AdSense ads are performing in relation to their site content.

This includes metrics such as revenue, CTR, and effective cost per thousand impressions (eCPM). These insights can help publishers optimise the placement and format of ads to maximise revenue.

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Google Products that Integrate with Google Analytics:

Google Optimize

Google Optimize is Google's A/B testing and personalisation tool. Integrating Google Optimize with Google Analytics allows you to use Analytics data to design experiments and personalise the website experience for different user segments. This integration helps in improving user engagement and conversion rates through data-driven decision-making.

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Google Products that Integrate with Google Analytics:

Google BigQuery

Linking Google Analytics with BigQuery gives you the ability to export raw, unsampled Analytics data into BigQuery. This enables advanced data analysis and integration with other datasets.

Analysts and marketers can run complex queries, perform detailed data analysis, and generate custom reports to gain deeper insights into user behaviour and website performance.

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Google Products that Integrate with Google Analytics:

Firebase

For mobile app analytics, Google Analytics can be integrated with Firebase, Google's mobile development platform. This integration provides detailed insights into app usage and user engagement.

You can track app installs, in-app purchases, user demographics, and much more, helping to refine app content and functionality based on user behaviour.

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Google Products that Integrate with Google Analytics:

Google Play

For Android app developers, linking Google Analytics with the Google Play Developer Console can provide insights into how users discover your app in the Play Store.

This includes tracking app views, installs, and uninstalls, as well as understanding the effectiveness of Play Store marketing efforts.

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Google Products that Integrate with Google Analytics:

Google Merchant Center

 By linking Google Analytics with Google Merchant Center, e-commerce businesses can track the performance of their Google Shopping ads and free product listings. This integration allows for a better understanding of how users interact with these listings and their path to purchase, enabling more effective campaign optimisation.

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THANK YOU FOR TODAY

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