GOOGLE ANALYTICS PHONE CALL TRACKING SETUP

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About the author

- Founder, OptimizeSmart.com

- Over 15 years of experience in digital analytics and marketing

- Author of four best-selling books on digital analytics and conversion optimization

- Nominated for Digital Analytics Association Awards for Excellence

- Runs one of the most popular blogs in the world on digital analytics

- Consultant to countless small and big businesses over the decade
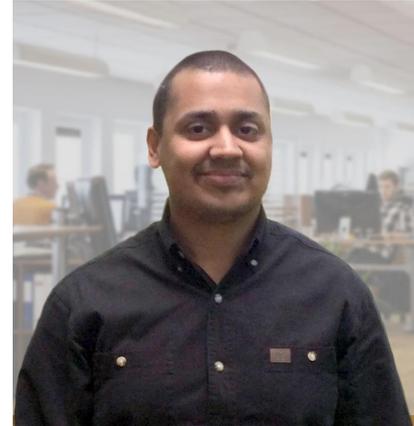
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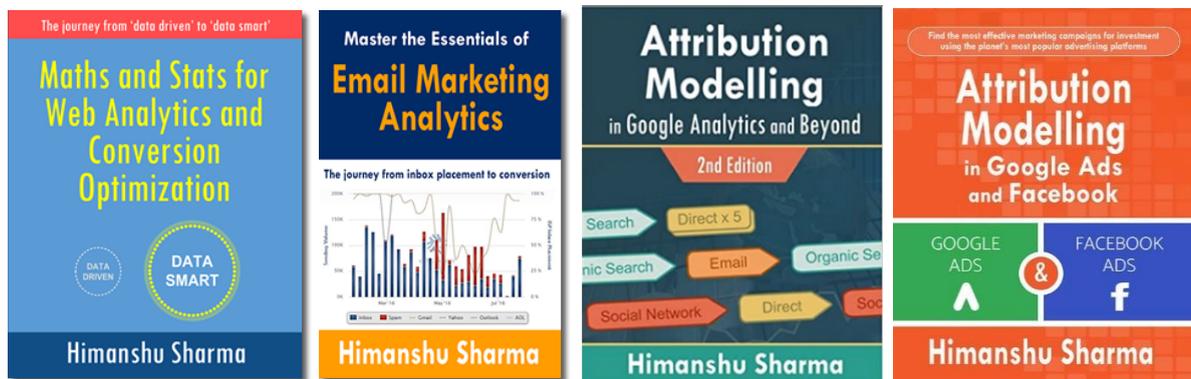
Following are our most downloaded ebooks for career advancement:

#1 Sales and ROI Accelerator (150+ pages)

WHAT'S INSIDE: My step-by-step blueprint for generating record sales and ROI by leveraging analytics data.

#2 Set Up Your Google Analytics 4 (GA4) Account Correctly And Fast (70 pages)

WHAT'S INSIDE: Learn to set up your GA4 account correctly and fast using this 62 points checklist.

FAQ: Do you show "How" to do each item on the checklist? If so, with screenshots?
Yes. There are links to the articles with detailed step by step instructions.

FAQ: Does this ebook cover GTM too?
Yes.

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WHAT'S INSIDE: My step-by-step blueprint for getting started with data layers. Get the only ebook on GTM data layers ever published. Learn the JavaScript behind it.

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#4 [Learn to Read E-Commerce Reports in Google Analytics (100+ pages)](#)

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#5 Do you want better skills in digital analytics and marketing? If yes, then [register for the free training](#):

Here's what we're going to cover…

1. Why digital analytics is the key to online business success.
2. The number 1 reason why most marketers are not able to scale their advertising and maximize sales.
3. Why Google and Facebook ads don't work for most businesses & how to make them work.
4. Why you won't get any competitive advantage in the marketplace just by knowing Google Analytics.
5. The number 1 reason why conversion optimization is not working for your business.
6. How to advertise on any marketing platform for FREE with an unlimited budget.
7. How to learn and master digital analytics and conversion optimization in record time.

Get helpful tips on a daily basis

If you are the type of person who finds it helpful to receive short tips on building your website traffic, improving conversions, fixing attribution issues and learning about analytics in general, then follow me on LinkedIn. I post a few short tips each day.

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Why do you need phone call tracking?

If your website has been set up mainly to generate leads through phone calls then you have to attribute phone calls to the correct traffic source. Understanding exactly which marketing channels and keywords are driving phone calls is invaluable.

Attributing phone calls to the correct marketing channels/keywords means you can increase the budget of the marketing channels/keywords which drive phone calls and reduce the budget of those that do not.

If phone calls are an important part of your lead/sales generation process then phone call tracking is one of the most effective methods to fix your online and offline attribution issues.

Attributing phone calls to the correct keywords means you are able to bid more aggressively on the keywords that work and reduce bids on the keywords that do not.

Note: A **phone call conversion** can be a sale or a lead resulted from a call. The percentage of phone calls which resulted in conversion is called the **phone call conversion rate**.

How to set up phone call tracking in Google Analytics?

Follow the steps below to set up phone call tracking for your website:

Step-1: Add phone numbers to your website.

Step-2: Sign up for a commercial phone call tracking solution like Call Tracking Metrics

Step-3: Purchase tracking numbers.

Step-4: Copy and paste the call tracking script.

Step-5: Add your call centre staff as users to your call tracking software.

Step-6: Link your call tracking account to your Google Analytics account.

Step-7: Link your call tracking account to your CRM account.

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Step-8: Set up phone calls as goal conversions in Google Analytics.

Step-9: Train your call centre staff to make notes and score each phone call.

Step-10: Enter your ad spend for each marketing channel and calculate phone call ROI.

Step-11: Determine the performance of your call centre staff.

Step-12: Create custom reports for detailed phone call analysis in Google Analytics.

Step-1: Add phone numbers to your website

Not only do you need to add phone numbers but you also need to be more strategic about how you display phone numbers on your website.

In order to increase the probability of generating more phone calls from your website, you need to prominently display phone numbers on your website. Remove other CTAs (call to actions) around your phone numbers.

Run an A/B test to determine the best location for displaying a phone number on a landing page.

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Step-2: Sign up for a commercial phone call tracking solution

Choose your phone call tracking service provider and sign up for their service. I like and use Call Tracking Metrics. I have used many call tracking solutions but this one seems to be the best fit.

Step-3: Purchase tracking numbers

You would need to buy at least one tracking number per tracking source in order to track phone calls from that traffic source. If you do not do this then you will not be able to track phone calls from a particular traffic source.

For example**,** if you do not buy a tracking number for direct traffic then you will not be able to track phone calls coming from direct traffic.

Similarly, if you do not buy a tracking number for Google paid search then you will not be able to track phone calls coming from Google paid searches.

In fact, you may need to buy a lot more than just one tracking number for each traffic source.

[Call Tracking Metrics (CTM)](link) uses a metric called likelihood score (also known as accuracy score) which refers to how confident CTM is that a particular website visitor made a particular phone call.

The score can range from 1% to 100%, with 100% being the most confident.

In order to keep your likelihood scores as close to 100% as possible, CTM recommends buying one tracking number for every 20 daily visitors to your website from a particular traffic source.

So if you wish to keep your likelihood scores as close to 100% as possible (which you should) for a particular traffic source then you need to buy tracking numbers equal to your daily visitors from the traffic source divided by 20.

For example,

if you want to keep your likelihood scores as close to 100% as possible for Google paid search and you are getting 1000 daily visitors through paid search, then ideally the number of tracking numbers you should buy would be (1000/20) / 20 = 50.

So you would need to buy 50 tracking numbers just for Google paid search traffic. Needless to say, you need to buy even more tracking numbers as your Google paid search traffic grows.

For high traffic websites, phone call tracking can get very expensive very fast. If you do not follow the 'daily visitors divided by 20' tracking numbers rule, your likelihood score may fall over time and you may see **data discrepancies between your call tracking and GA reports**.

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I would recommend that you buy tracking numbers for each of the following tracking sources (if applicable in your situation):

1. Direct traffic.
2. Google organic.
3. Google paid.
4. Bing paid.
5. Referrals.
6. Email.
7. Social media ads (like Facebook ads)
8. Outdoor ads
9. TV/Radio ads

When you set up a new tracking number in your call tracking software, you would need to specify the **receiving number** and the tracking source.

> *The receiving number is the phone number to which calls will be forwarded to, from the tracking number.*

The receiving number is usually your phone number. All of the tracking numbers you bought, will forward the call to your receiving number(s).

> *The more tracking numbers you buy, the more you can segment the data.*

For example,

if you buy one unique tracking number for each display ad, you can then track the performance of each display ad individually, in terms of generating phone call leads/sales.

Step-4: Copy and paste the call tracking script

The call tracking script is provided by your call tracking software vendor and needs to be placed on each and every page of your website.

The script is generally placed in the head section (i.e. between the <HEAD> and </HEAD> tags).

Once you complete this task, your call tracking software can then talk to your website.

Step-5: Add your call centre staff as users to your call tracking software

Every call centre agent must use call tracking software all the time to tag calls (more about this later).

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Step-6: Link your call tracking account to your Google Analytics account

By doing this, you can send phone call data into Google Analytics.

For more details, refer to the help documentation from your call tracking service provider or contact their customer support.

Step-7: Link your call tracking account to your CRM account

By doing this, you can send phone call data as **leads** into your CRM.

For more details, refer to the help documentation from your call tracking service provider or contact their customer support.

Step-8: Set up phone calls as goal conversions in Google Analytics.

Ask your call tracking vendor, how do they send phone call data to Google Analytics.

Some vendors send phone call data as 'events', while others send call data as 'virtual pageviews' to GA.

If your call tracking software sends call data via events (and it should be doing that) then ask your vendor exactly how the call data is structured as GA events.

For example here is how *Call Tracking Metrics* structure the phone call data as GA events:

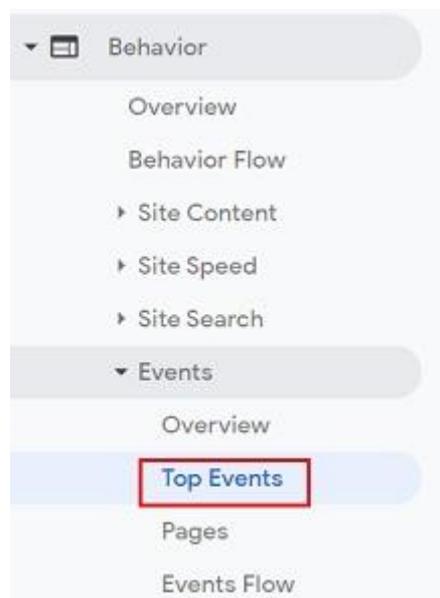| GA Event Field	Call Tracking Data Value
Category	Calls
Action	Tracking Source like 'Google Organic', 'Google Adwords', 'Direct', 'Email' etc
Label	Caller Information like caller phone number, call type (first call or repeated call) & caller id
Value	Length of the phone calls in seconds

1. '***Event Category***' field called 'Calls' is used to report on the phone call data.

2. '*Event Action*' field is used to report on the phone call tracking source (like Google organic search).

3. '*Event Label*' field is used to report on the caller information (like phone call number, caller id, etc)

4. '**Event Value**' field is used to report on the length of a phone call in seconds.

Call Tracking Metrics **uses a second 'event category' called 'Call Sale' to report on the phone calls sales data.**

Ask your vendor how they report on phone call sales data.

You can find the call data in the '***Top events***' report (under *Behavior > Events*) in your GA view:

Look for the 'event categories' called 'Calls' and/or 'Call Sales' (or something similar) to find phone call data in your 'Top Events' report:

Event Category ?
1. Calls
2. CallSale

Click on an 'event category' name to get more phone call details:

Event Action ?		Event Label ?	
1. Google Adwords		1. "not set", ~ ͪ ͨ ͥͬ ͯͭ ͪ ͨͣ3:first-call, 6~~~ ͣ	
2. Google Organic		2. "not set", ~	3:first-call,
3. Bing Organic		3. "not set", ~	3:first-call, ⌣
4. Direct		4. "not set", ~	3:repeat-call,

Once you know how the call data is structured in GA reports, you can then use this information to set phone calls as **event goals** in your GA view.

For example, you can use the following goal configuration (provided you use the *CallTrackingMetrics* solution) to track the total number of phone calls in GA:

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Note: When you leave the action, label and value fields blank, the event goal tracks all the calls. Make sure that you **do not** specify event value as the goal value.
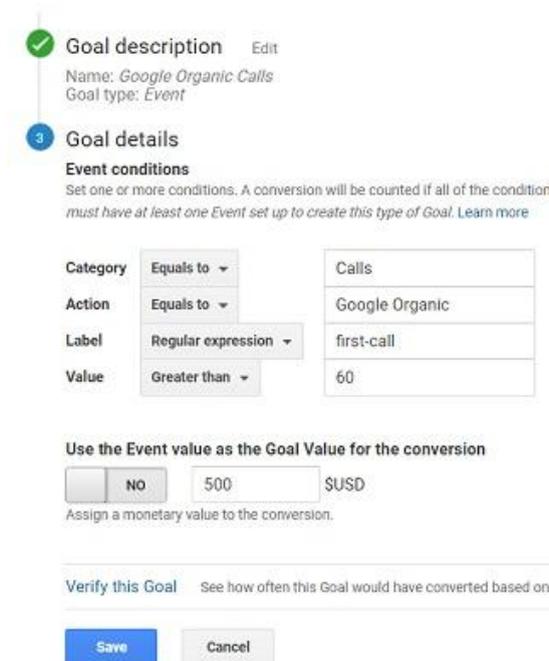
In the screenshot above, a phone call is worth $500 to the business. That is why I have added $500 as the goal value. You can determine what a phone call is worth to you, by doing this simple calculation:

> *Phone call value = total revenue generated through phone calls in the last month/ total number of phone calls in the month.*

This will give you the average value of a phone call, which you can then use as a goal value.

Note: You may need to add a new phone call value each month, to keep seasonality into account.

If you want to track phone calls from 'Google organic search' which are unique (i.e. not repeated calls from the same caller) and which are more than sixty seconds in time duration (and you use the *CallTrackingMetrics* solution) you could use the following similar goal configuration:

Note: The value of the label field is '*first-call*' which tells GA to track only those callers who called for the first time and not to track repeated calls from the same caller.

Once you have set up phone calls as goals in GA, they will soon be available in all GA reports which have got the goals tab:

In this way, you can tie phone calls to your web analytics data.

Step-9: Train your call centre staff to make notes and score each phone call

This is the most important step in setting up phone call tracking as it allows you to calculate the **ROI of your phone call tracking efforts**.

Your call tracking reports will be of little value if your call centre staff are not scoring each and every phone call.

Scoring a phone call means giving it a star rating and assigning it a sales amount if it results in sales.

Call Tracking Metrics uses a five-star rating system which is used on the basis of how good or bad the phone call lead was.

For example:

If the phone call turned out to be a wrong number, then a CSR can give the call a one-star rating. However, if you get a large volume of phone calls, you can choose not to score wrong numbers, as scoring a call is time-consuming.

If the caller seems very interested in making a purchase then the CSR can give the call a four-star rating.

If the caller makes a purchase then the CSR can give the call a five-star rating and at the same time assign a monetary value to it. This monetary value is equal to the price for which a product/service was sold over the phone.

The following example can give you an idea of how phone calls are being scored in call tracking software:

#1 Log-in to *Call Tracking Metrics* and then navigate to the '**call log**' report under the '**Calls**' menu:
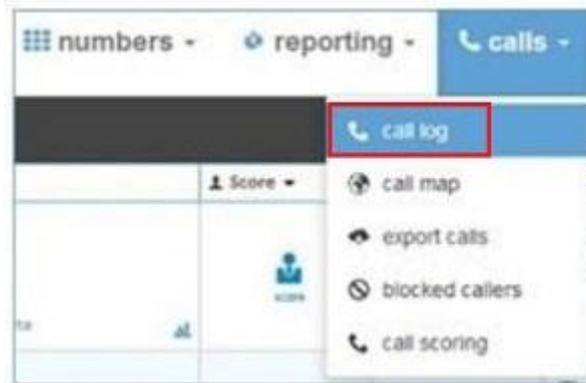
#2 Click on the 'notes' button:

This button is used to make notes about each phone call.

Once you click on this button you will see a dialog box like the one below:
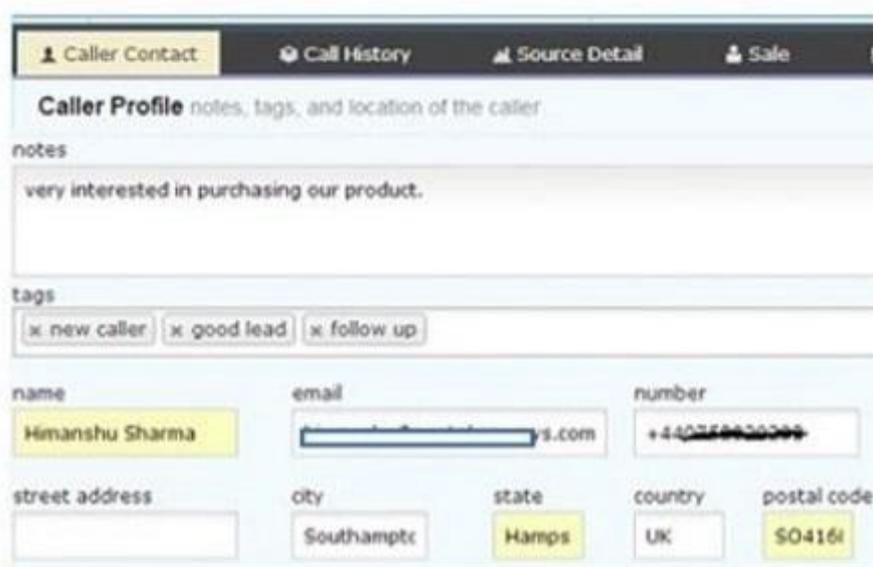
You would need to train your call centre staff to make notes about each phone call (both inbound and outbound calls) either during a call or after the call.

Most CSR prefers to make notes during the call as making notes after a phone call can leave other callers in waiting.

The 'notes' text field is used to make notes by the CSR whereas the 'tags' text field is used to **tag each phone call**.

You can enter any tag you wish. You can add tags like 'follow up', 'good lead', 'big party', 'new caller', 'repeat callers', 'hang up', 'inquiry' etc. These tags can later help you in filtering out call tracking data from reports.

Now click on the '*sale*' tab in the top navigation. You will see a dialogue box like the one below:

This dialogue box is used to score each phone call.

It is very important that you score each call by giving it a star rating.

This will help you later in ROI reporting.

The **'reporting tag'** (see the screenshot above) is another way to classify your calls (you can use product/service name, product code, etc as reporting tags).

If the phone call resulted in a sale, then you must switch on the 'converted' button (see the screenshot below) and enter the converted amount and the conversion date:

For example,

In the screenshot above, I rated the call five stars because it resulted in a sale. Since the phone call resulted in a sale of $2,500, I entered 2,500 in the 'converted amount' text box and specified the conversion date in the date text box**.**

The converted amount mentioned here automatically gets imported into Google Analytics reports via the event category called *CallSale* as mentioned earlier.

In this way, you can import the sales associated with a phone call into Google Analytics.

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Step-10: Enter your ad spend for each marketing channel and calculate phone call ROI

In order to calculate the ROI of your phone call efforts, you would need two metrics – sales and cost.

You can calculate the sales figure by scoring each phone call as described earlier.

The cost data is something that you will need to enter manually into your call tracking software every month, for each marketing channel.

In the case of *CallTrackingMetrics*, click on the '**ROI dashboard**' under the 'reporting' menu. You will then see an entry form where you can enter your monthly ad spend for each marketing channel:

Once you have supplied the cost data, your ROI dashboard will be automatically updated and you can see the ROI for each marketing channel:

call source	monthly advertising spend	calls	unique callers	cost / call	cost / caller	calls closed	% of calls closed	total revenue	ROI
Google Paid	$ 450.0	541	403	$0.83	$1.11	4	0.0073%	$1050.0	133.33%
Youtube	$ 700.0	28	25	$25	$28	4	0.1428%	$3393.0	384.71%

Here:

Cost/call = monthly advertising spend on the call source/total calls from the same source.

For example, in the case of Google paid search:

Cost/call = $450/541 = $0.83

Cost/caller = monthly advertising spend on the call source / total unique callers from the same source

For example, in the case of Google paid search:

Cost/caller = $450/403 = $1.11

Calls closed = the total number of calls from a source which resulted in sales.

For example, in the case of Google paid, the number of calls closed is 4 (i.e. four calls resulted in sales from Google paid search in a month).

Percentage of calls closed denotes the percentage of phone calls which resulted in a sale. It is equal to *calls closed/total calls*.

Callers closed denotes the number of unique callers who made a purchase over the phone.

Percentage of callers closed denotes the percentage of unique callers who made a purchase over the phone. It is equal to *callers closed/total unique callers*.

Total revenue denotes the total revenue generated from a particular call source.

ROI = (total revenue from a call source – monthly advertising spend on the call source)/ monthly advertising spend on the call source.

For example, in the case of Google paid search:

ROI = ($1050 – $450) / $450 = 133.33%

Step-11: Determine the performance of your call centre staff

The cool thing about using call tracking software is that you no longer need to guess the performance of your call centre staff and make faith-based decisions when it comes to performance appraisal.

Not only can you listen to the actual conversation between your CSR and a caller, to determine how the CSR is handling calls but you can also go one step ahead and calculate the revenue generated by each CSR.

Step-12: Create custom reports for detailed phone call analysis in Google Analytics

For detailed phone call analysis in GA, you should create custom reports. Custom reports provide much more flexibility in terms of retrieving and reporting on phone call data.

One big advantage of using custom reports is that you can easily retrieve phone calls volume (in addition to phone call conversion rate) for each traffic source. This is something that is not possible with standard GA reports.

I cannot tell you in advance what custom reports you should create, as your situation and requirements are likely to be different.

How does phone call tracking work?

Here is how phone call tracking works in general:

#1 As soon as a visitor lands on your website, the **call tracking script** (which is deployed on your website) records the:

- **Call tracking source** (source of the phone call).

- **Landing page**.

- **Keywords used** (if any).

The call tracking source can be direct traffic, Google organic traffic, Google Ads traffic, Facebook traffic, Twitter, YouTube, TV ad, radio ads, print ads etc.

#2 The call tracking script looks for the **traffic source-specific tracking number** which you purchased in your call tracking account.

If the script is able to find that number then it replaces the **target number** (the number that is hardcoded on your website) with the tracking number.

For example,

If a visitor lands on your website via Google organic search then he is going to see a **Google organic tracking number** (phone number meant for tracking calls from Google organic search traffic) instead of the phone number hardcoded on your website.

If a visitor lands on your website via Google paid search (Google Ads) then he is going to see a **Google Ads tracking number** (phone number meant for tracking calls from Google Ads traffic) instead of the phone number that is hardcoded on your website.

Similarly, if a visitor lands on your website via Facebook then he is going to see a **Facebook tracking number**, a **direct tracking number** in the case of direct traffic and so on.

#3 The visitor calls the tracking number (instead of the hardcoded phone number on your website) and the call tracking script starts recording more details about the caller (like the actual phone call conversation, phone duration etc).

#4 Once the visitor completes the call, your **CSR (customer service representative)** scores the call using your call tracking software.

#5 The call tracking script sends all the phone call data to the call tracking software.

#6 The call tracking software can then be used to send phone call data to third-party tools like Google Analytics, Kissmetrics, Salesforce etc.

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You are doing Google Analytics all wrong. Here is why...

I have dealt with hundreds of Google Analytics accounts in my career.

I have seen a lot of issues from incorrect tracking code, selecting the wrong KPIs to analyzing data without using custom reports or advanced segments.

But do you know the biggest issue of all in Google analytics?....

It is the "misinterpretation of analytics data".

Many marketers make the mistake of crediting conversions to the wrong marketing channel.

And they seem to be making this mistake over and over again.

They give the credit for conversions to the last touchpoint (campaign, ad, search term...).

They can't help themselves because they believe that the Google Analytics reports are 'what you see is what you get'.

But they are actually 'what you interpret is what you get'.

This has resulted in marketers making wrong business decisions and losing money.

All the data you see in Google Analytics reports today lies to you unless you know exactly how to interpret it correctly.

For example, let's talk about direct traffic.

All untagged or incorrectly tagged marketing campaigns from display ads to emails could be reported as direct traffic by Google.

Whenever a referrer is not passed, the traffic is reported as direct traffic by Google.

Mobile applications don't send a referrer. Word/PDF documents don't send a referrer.

'302 redirects' sometimes cause the referrer to be dropped. Sometimes browsers don't pass the referrer.

During an HTTP to HTTPS redirect (or vice versa) the referrer is not passed because of security reasons.

All such traffic is reported as direct traffic by Google.

So on the surface, it may look like that most people are visiting your website directly but this is not usually the case.

But this analysis does not end here, because you are still not looking at the complete picture.

People do not always access your website directly and then make a purchase straight away.

They are generally exposed to multiple marketing channels (display ads, social media, paid search, organic search, referral websites, email etc) before they access your website directly.

Before they make a purchase.

So if you are unaware of the role played by prior marketing channels, you will credit conversions to the wrong marketing channels.

Like in the present case to direct traffic.

To get this type of understanding you need to understand and implement web analytics.

But **you learn data analysis and data interpretation from web analytics and not from Google Analytics.**

The direction in which your analysis will move will determine the direction in which your marketing campaigns will move.

You get that direction from 'web analytics' and not from 'Google Analytics'.

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Web/Digital analytics is not about Google Analytics (GA) or Google Tag Manager (GTM). It is about analyzing and interpreting data, setting up goals, strategies and KPIs.

It's about creating a strategic roadmap for your business.

That's why the knowledge of web/digital analytics is so important.

So, what I have done is put together some completely free training for you.

This training will teach you what digital analytics really is and how I have been able to leverage it to generate floods of new sales and customers.

I will also show you how you can copy what I have done to get similar results.

You can sign up for the free training here:

Reserve My Seat Now

I hope you find it helpful.

All the best,

Himanshu