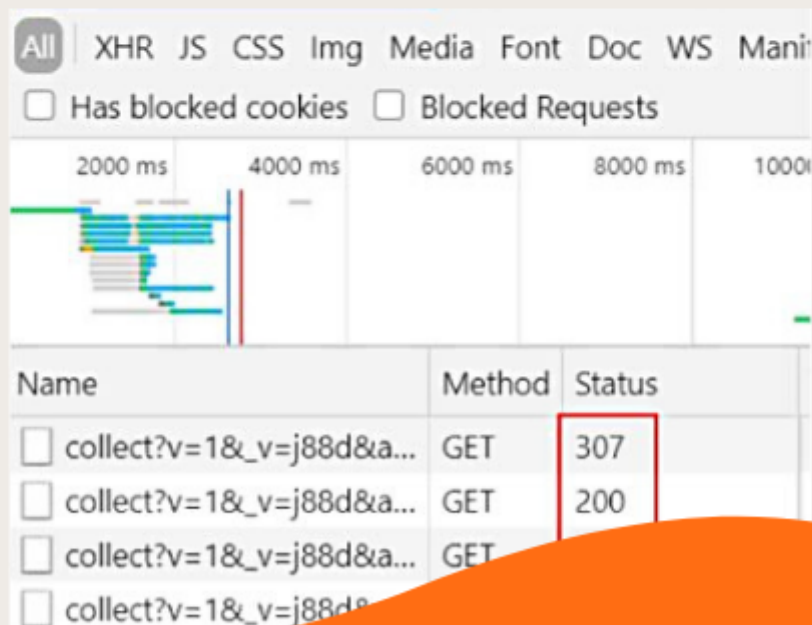


# GOOGLE ANALYTICS TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE

BY HIMANSHU SHARMA  
FOUNDER OF OPTIMIZESMART.COM



# Google Analytics Troubleshooting Guide

**Written by Himanshu Sharma, Founder of Optimize Smart**

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## About the author

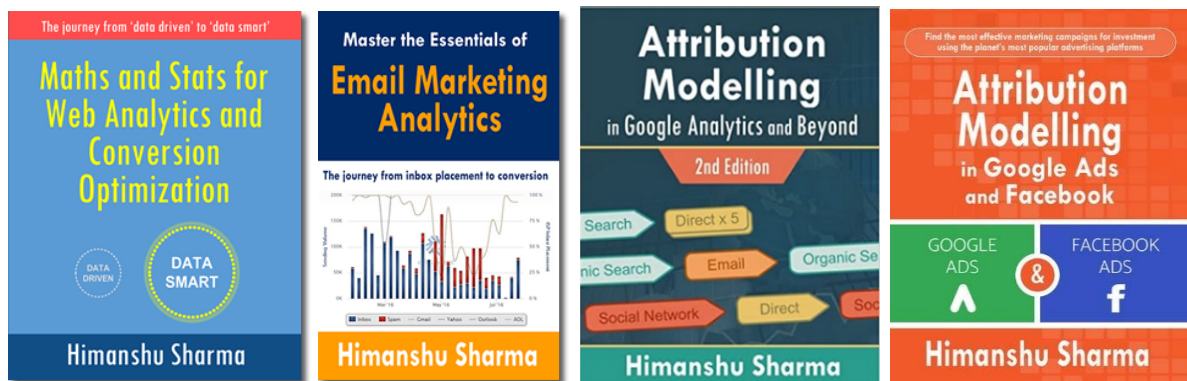
- Founder, OptimizeSmart.com
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- Author of four best-selling books on digital analytics and conversion optimization
- Nominated for Digital Analytics Association Awards for Excellence
- Runs one of the most popular blogs in the world on digital analytics
- Consultant to countless small and big businesses over the decade



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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/optimizesmart>



## 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.

### #3 [Google Tag Manager Data Layers \(100+ pages\)](#)

**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.

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

**WHAT'S INSIDE:** My step-by-step guide to reading both standard and enhanced e-commerce reports in Google Analytics. E-commerce reports are the most valuable reports in Google Analytics.

#### #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.

[Click here and follow me on LinkedIn](#)

## Google Analytics not working?

Sometimes Google Analytics tracking code just stops working (i.e. does not fire anymore).

Sometimes the tracking code fires but certain hits (like 'event' hit) just drop (i.e. not sent to the GA server). In that case, your existing or new tracking code may not work.

So how can you fix the problem?

There may or may not be an easy fix and there is certainly no 'one size fit all' solution. But there are a couple of things you can do to determine what has gone wrong and what can be done to fix the issue.

## #1 Delete and disable the cache

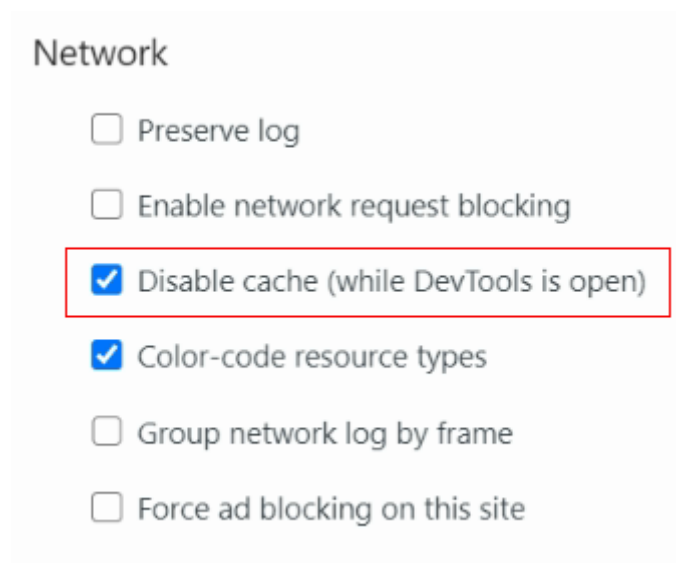
You may be in a situation where you are making a lot of code changes to your website but nothing is reflecting in your Google Analytics real-time reports or via any other debugging tool you may be using.

Chances are, your **CDN** (like 'Cloudflare'), **cache plugin** (like 'WP Super Cache') and/or **web browser** keep loading the previous version of your web page and they have cached your web page and all of its elements (images, JavaScript, etc) so good (but for you so bad) that no amount of 'browser refresh' make any difference.

So code changes do not load correctly or do not load at all, in your web browser. Your testing could become hard if you can't see the changes you are making.

You need to delete all the existing cache and disable the new cache from creating while you are making code changes or doing testing.

Also, make sure that the checkbox '**Disable Cache (while DevTools is open)**' in the Chrome developer tool settings is checked:



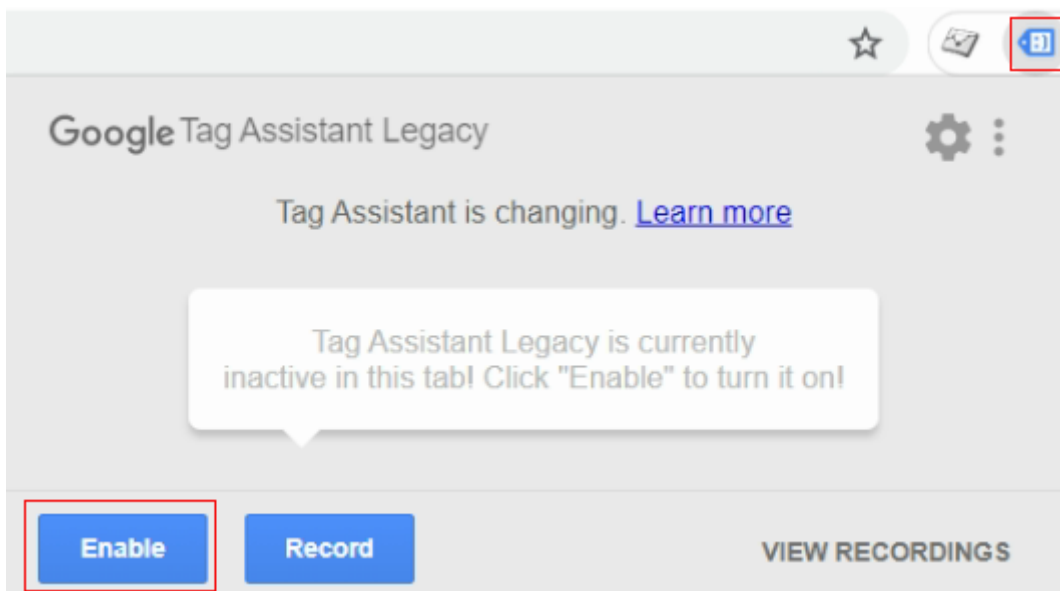
This setting disables browser caching for the page you are visiting while the developer console is still open.

## #2 Use Google Tag Assistant and check 'where to optimize'

[Google Tag Assistant](#) is a chrome extension through which you can identify, validate and troubleshoot the installation of various Google Tags on a web page.

**Follow the steps below:**

**Step-1:** [Install Google Tag Assistant Chrome extension](#) and then enable it.

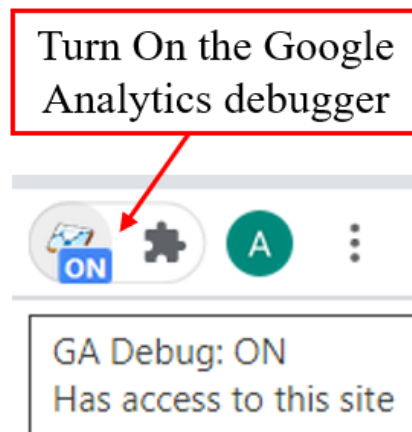




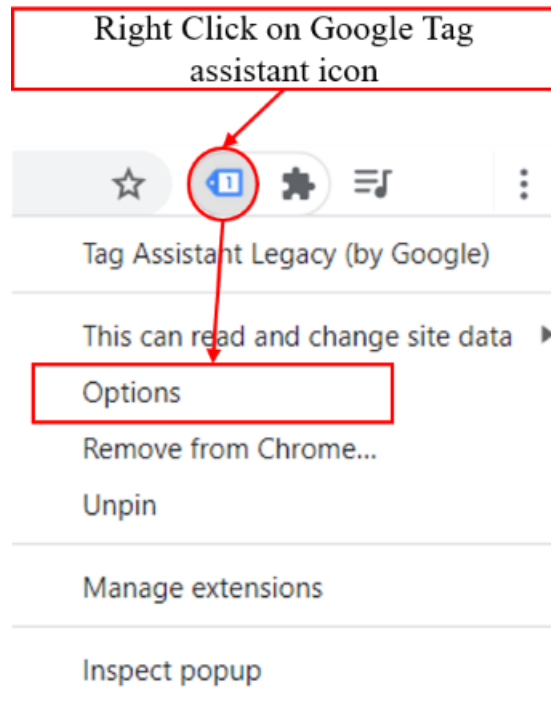
**Step-2:** [Install Google Analytics debugger chrome extension](#) and then enable it.

The GA debugger, reports on error messages and warnings related to your tracking code in the developer console and tag assistant.

**Step-3:** Switch on the **Google Analytics debugger** by clicking on its icon on the top right-hand side of your browser address bar:



**Step-4:** Right-click on the tag assistant icon and then select 'Options:



**Step-5:** Change the 'Level of Details' for all Google tags to 'Detailed Information':

#### LEVEL OF DETAIL

DEFAULT LEVEL:

CAMPAIGN MANAGER:

FLOODLIGHT:

GLOBAL SITE TAG (GTAG.JS):

GOOGLE AD MANAGER:

GOOGLE ADS CONVERSION TRACKING:

GOOGLE ADS REMARKETING TAG:

GOOGLE ANALYTICS:

GOOGLE CONSUMER SURVEY:

GOOGLE OPTIMIZE:

GOOGLE PUBLISHER TAG:

GOOGLE TAG MANAGER:

GOOGLE TRUSTED STORES:

WEBSITE SATISFACTION SURVEY:

**Step-6:** Within the tag assistant options, make sure that the ‘Recording: Follow Links Across Tabs’ and ‘Auto-open recordings report when recording is done’ checkboxes are checked:

#### GLOBAL OPTIONS

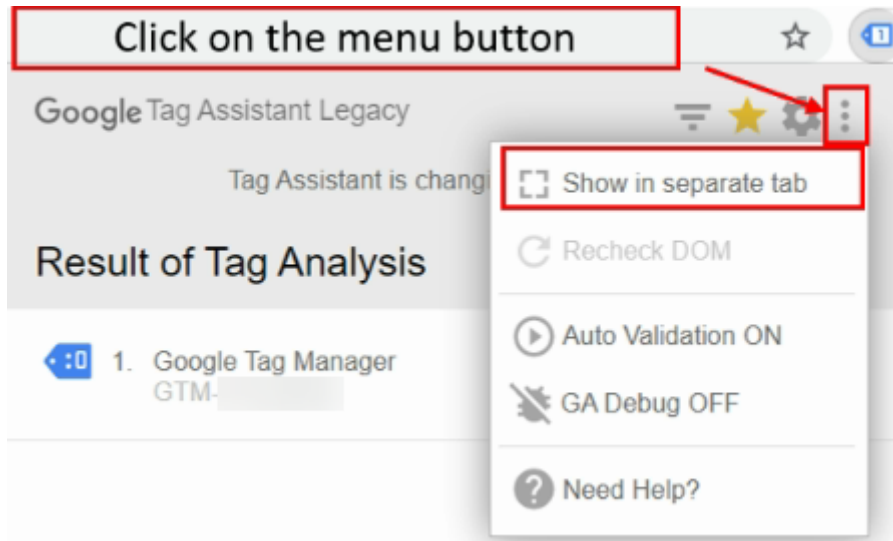
My Favorites

Ignore external scripts

Recording: Follow Links Across Tabs

Auto open recordings report when recording is stopped.

**Step-7:** Click on the Google Tag Assistant icon again and then click on the 'Menu' button. Make sure that 'Auto Validation' and 'GA Debug' settings are turned ON:



**Step-8:** Navigate to that web page of your website where you want to test your Google Analytics tracking code.

**Step-9:** Click on the tag assistant icon and look for the following message '**No Google Analytics HTTP responses because....**' under the section 'where to optimize':

▼ Where to optimize



No Google Analytics HTTP responses because opted out code detected.

Record

VIEW RECORDINGS

‘**No Google Analytics HTTP responses**’ mean your Google Analytics tracking code is not firing.

In my case, I am using the **Google Analytics opt-out add on** Chrome extension which has disabled Google Analytics. So I am aware of why the GA tag is not firing.

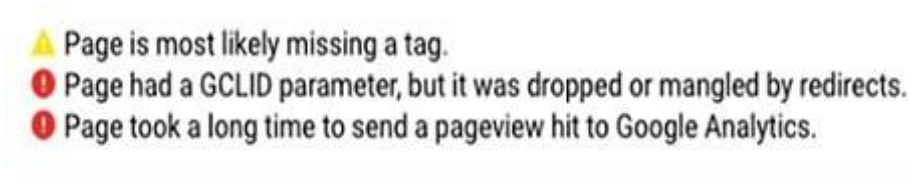
Make sure that you are not using any similar browser add-on/extension which disables Google Analytics in your browser.

Sometimes firewall settings can disable Google Analytics.

There could be many other reasons for a GA pageview hit getting dropped, such as:

- Web page missing the Google Analytics Tracking Code (**GATC**)
- Web page contains invalid GATC
- Web page taking too long to send the pageview hit.
- Google Tag Manager not firing the Google Analytics tag.

Google Tag Assistant may reveal what might be going wrong on your web page by displaying a warning or error:



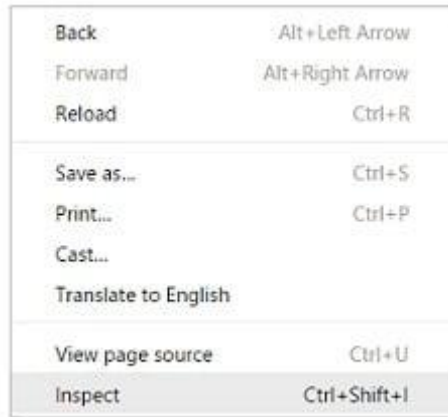
## #3 Use developer console and look for ‘abort’ and ‘command ignored’ error messages

**Google developer console** is a debugging tool that is already built-in chrome browser. So you don’t need to install it separately. Just right click on a web page and select ‘Inspect’ to open it.

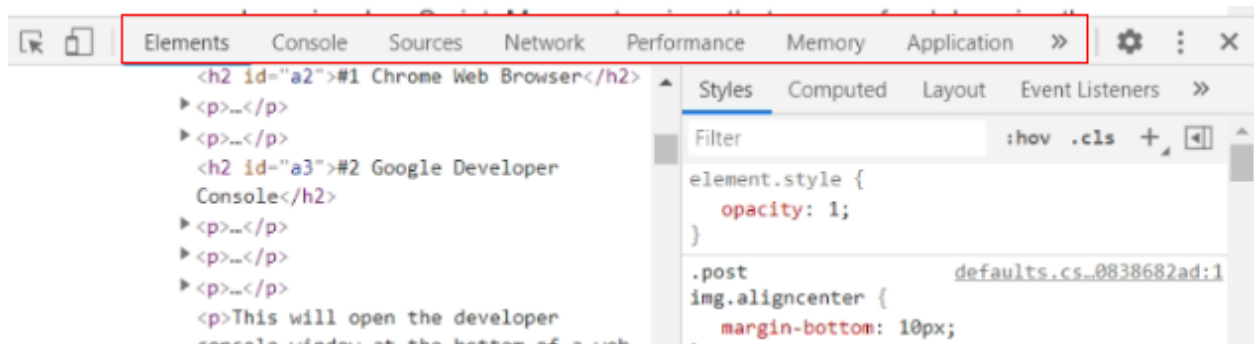
### **Follow the steps below:**

**Step-1:** Navigate to that web page of your website where you want to test your Google Analytics tracking code.

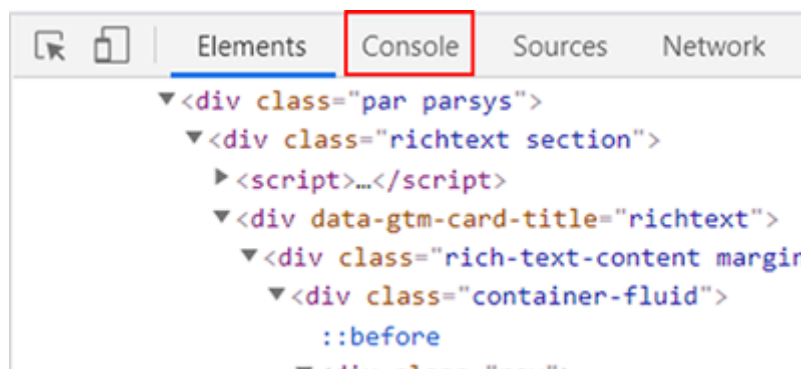
**Step-2:** Right-click on a web page and select ‘Inspect’ (in the chrome web browser).



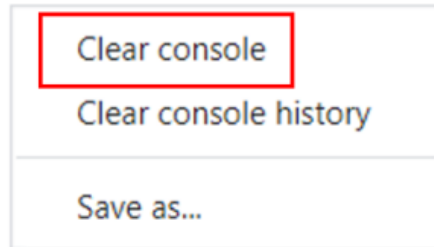
This action will open the developer console at the bottom of the web page:



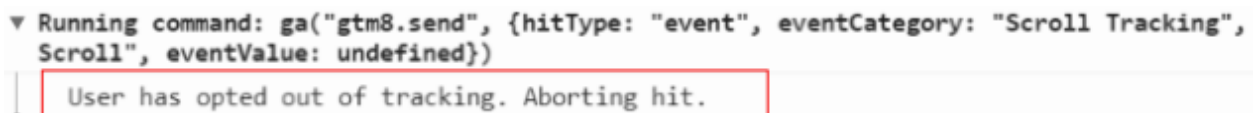
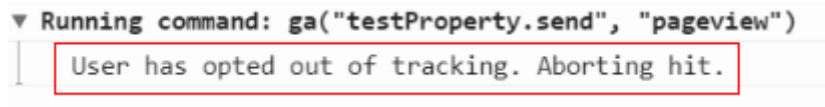
**Step-3:** Click on the 'Console' tab.



**Step-4:** Right-click on the console and then select 'clear console':



**Step-6:** Reload your web page in the web browser and then look for error messages related to aborting:







Whenever a hit is dropped, aborted or a Google Analytics command is ignored, it means your tracking code is not working the way it is supposed to work.

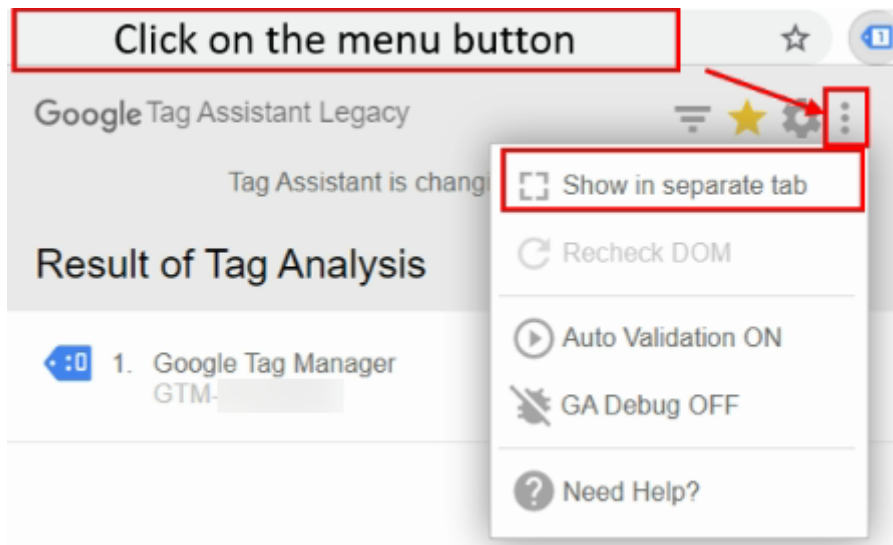
## #5 Use Google Tag Assistant recording to find dropped hits

[Google Tag Assistant Recording](#) is one of the features of Google Tag Assistant through which you can validate tags across multiple web pages.

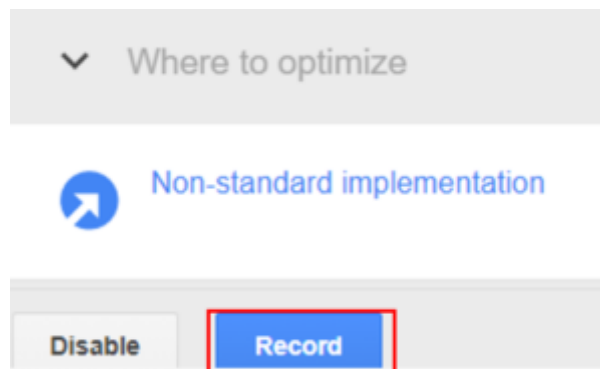
Google Tag Assistant by default can not validate tags across multiple web pages. So you would need to use its recording feature.

### **Follow the steps below:**

**Step-1:** Click on the Google Tag Assistant icon again and then click on the 'Menu' button > 'Show in separate tab'. The 'Show in separate tab' menu item will open the Google Tag Assistant in a separate browser tab:

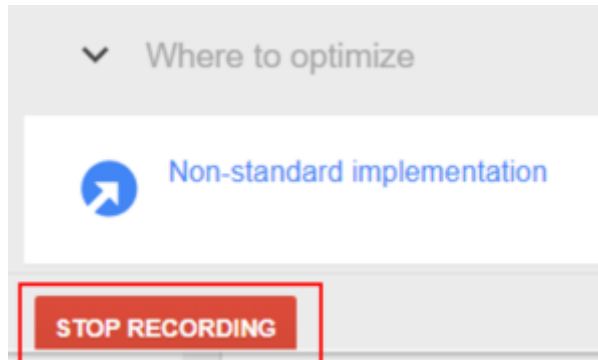


**Step-2:** Click on the 'Record' button at the bottom of the 'Result of Tag Analysis' window:

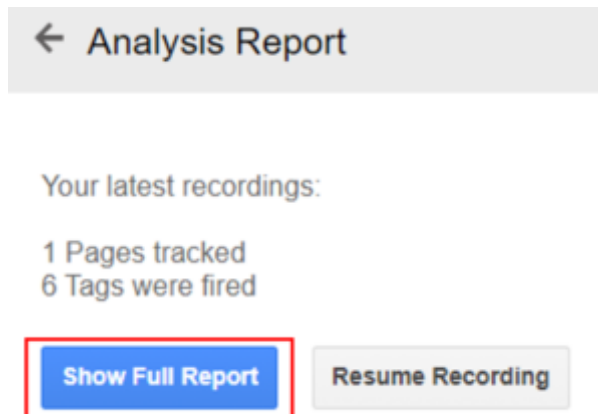


**Step-3:** Now reload the web page from where you want to start the recording. This reload will send a request/hit to Google Tag Assistant and your recording will actually start.

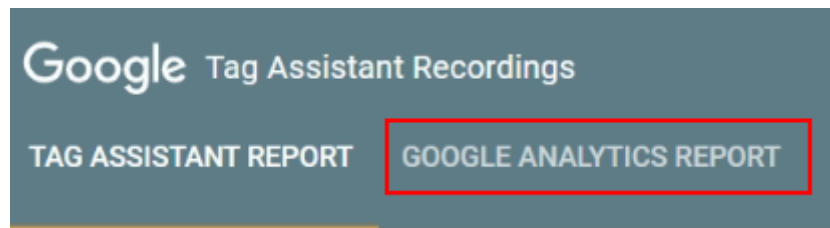
**Step-4:** Click on the 'Stop recording' button:



**Step-5:** Click on the 'Show Full Report' button. Once you clicked on this button, you will be redirected to 'Google Tag Assistant Recordings'.



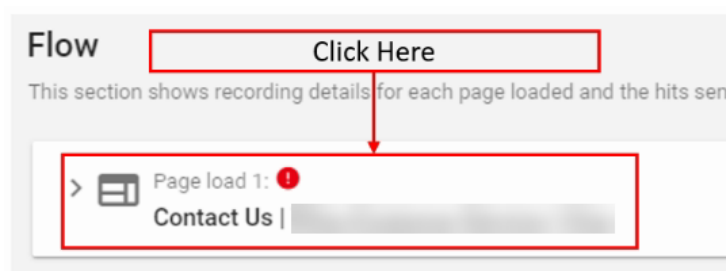
**Step-6:** Click on the 'Google Analytics Reports' tab:



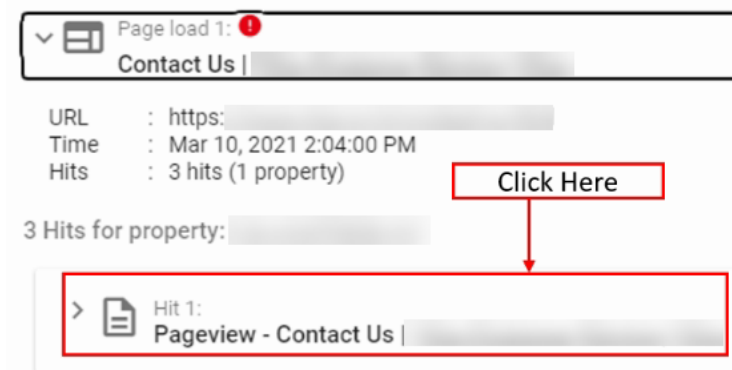
**Step-7:** Select your GA property and view. You will then see the 'Google Analytics report' of the tag assistant recording.



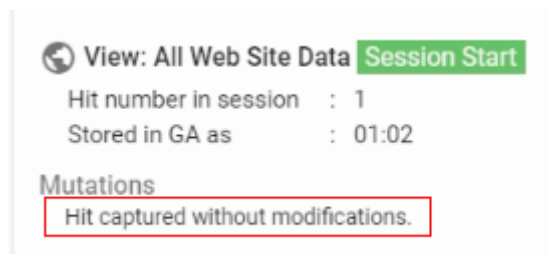
**Step-8:** Scroll down to the bottom of the Google Analytics report and click on 'Page Load' under the 'Flow' section:



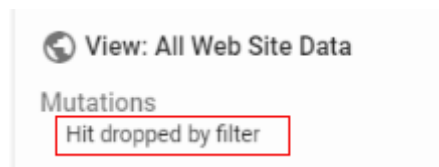
**Step-9:** Click on 'Hit 1':



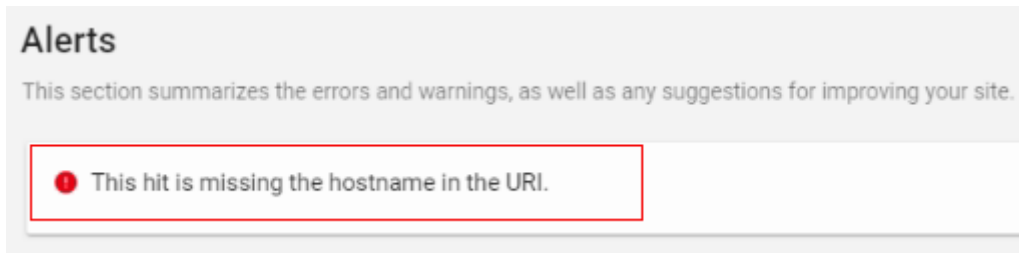
**Step-10:** Now look at the message under '**Mutation**'. It should be something like the one below:



If the hit is dropped then you may see a message like the one below:



Sometimes errors and warnings are prominently displayed by tag assistant recordings which you can find under the '**Alerts**' section:



Check the [official Tag Assistant Recordings alert message reference guide](#) to learn more about these error messages and what action can be taken to fix them.

## #6 Avoid non-standard implementation of Google Analytics

There are only two recommended ways to [install Google Analytics on a website](#):

#1 By directly placing the Google Analytics Tracking Code in the head section of all the web pages of a website.

#2 By using a tag management solution like Google Tag Manager.

When you deploy the Google Analytics tracking code in any other way, your GA set-up may no longer remain a standard implementation.

**Following are examples of non-standard implementation of Google Analytics:**

- Google Analytics tracking code (GATC) is placed outside the head section (<head> ...</head>) of a web page.
- GATC is being executed via an [external JavaScript](#) file.
- GATC contains Google Analytics commands which your current GA analytics library does not recognize/recommend.
- GATC contains invalid formatting (extra comma, extra whitespaces, bracket or semicolon)
- GATC contains invalid casing (GA function names are case sensitive)
- GATC deployed via a third-party plugin.
- [Using multiple Google Analytics tracking code on the same page.](#)

There are many webmasters who use a third-party plugin to install Google Analytics tracking on their websites.

These plugins often modify the original Google Analytics tracking code by:

- Changing the [name of the tracking object](#).
- Adding new [Google Analytics commands](#)



- Adding their own lines of codes between the Google Analytics tracking code.

Now if something goes wrong with the plugin itself or you customized the Google Analytics tracking code in such a way that the plugin no longer communicates with the GA JavaScript then your tracking may stop working.

Your testing could become really hard if you are not familiar with the plugin code and how it is supposed to work with Google Analytics.

Unless you are a 'ninja' or 'guru' of Google Analytics development environment, you know exactly what you are doing and how it can affect existing website tracking and/or you can decode any plugin, your best bet is to stay away from such third-party plugins and stick to the standard installation of Google Analytics.

## **#7 Avoid customizing the standard Google Analytics tracking code**

Avoid making any changes to your Google Analytics tracking code, unless you are 100% sure what you are doing.

Use a test property if you really want to learn new tricks. Avoid experimenting on a live website esp. if it does not belong to you.

If you have already changed the Google Analytics tracking code then replace it with the fresh code provided by Google Analytics.

Make sure that you copy-paste the GATC directly into the HTML of your web pages without changing its formatting or casing.

## **#8 Look for broken GTM container tag**

The use of Google Tag Manager (GTM) makes tag deployment very easy and efficient.

But sometimes during website updates, the container tag can break. And when that happens all of the website tracking stop working immediately. So if you use GTM then make sure that the container tag is still intact.

## **#9 Avoid non-standard implementation of Google Tag Manager**

There is only one recommended way to install Google Tag Manager on a website:

Add one part of the container tag code (the JavaScript part) in the <head>...</head> section of a web page and the other part (the iframe part) in the body section of a web page (immediately after the opening <body> tag:

### Install Google Tag Manager



Copy the code below and paste it onto every page of your website.

Paste this code as high in the <head> of the page as possible:

```
<!-- Google Tag Manager -->
<script>(function(w,d,s,l,i){w[l]=w[l]||[];w[l].push({'gtm.start':
new Date().getTime(),event:'gtm.js'});var f=d.getElementsByTagName(s)[0],
j=d.createElement(s),dl=l!='dataLayer'?'&l='+l:'';j.async=true;j.src=
'https://www.googletagmanager.com/gtm.js?id='+i+dl;f.parentNode.insertBefore(j,f);
})(window,document,'script','dataLayer','GTM-TLH4SJR');</script>
<!-- End Google Tag Manager -->
```



Additionally, paste this code immediately after the opening <body> tag:

```
<!-- Google Tag Manager (noscript) -->
<noscript><iframe src="https://www.googletagmanager.com/ns.html?id=GTM-TLH4SJR"
height="0" width="0" style="display:none;visibility:hidden"></iframe></noscript>
<!-- End Google Tag Manager (noscript) -->
```



For more information about installing the Google Tag Manager snippet, visit our [Quick Start Guide](#).

OK

When you deploy the GTM container tag code in any other way, your GA set-up may no longer remain a standard implementation.

**Following are examples of non-standard implementation of Google Tag Manager:**

- All of the GTM container tag codes were added immediately after the opening `<body>` tag.
- GTM container tag code added immediately before the closing `</body>` tag.
- The container code is deployed via an external JavaScript file.
- Container code contains invalid formatting and/or invalid casing.
- GTM container code deployed via another tag management solution
- Use of multiple container codes on the same web page.
- Use of a third-party plugin to install Google Tag Manager on a website.

Now I am not saying that you can not make the non-standard implementation of GA/GTM work for you.

But remember, when you have got a non-standard setup (the one which is not recommended by Google) you could end up creating hard to diagnose tracking issues.

Often a non-standard tracking setup behaves in an unexpected way and if you are not familiar with the GA/GTM development environment then you could make your testing and debugging unnecessarily difficult.

## **#10 Avoid customizing the GTM container tag**

They say a little knowledge is a dangerous thing and this is particularly true for Google Tag Manager.

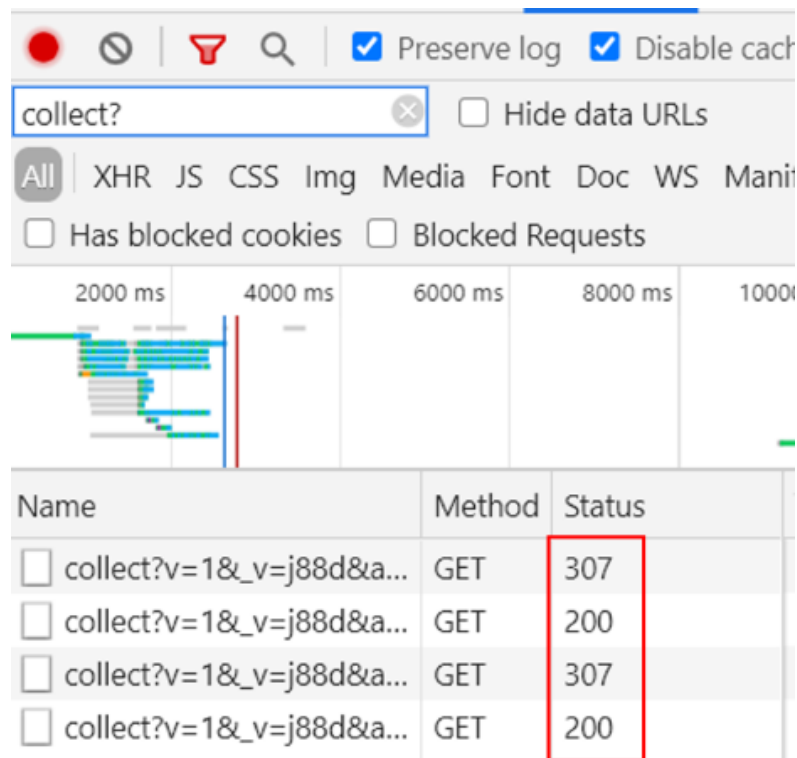
If you accidentally break your container tag while customizing it, all of your website trackings can stop working immediately.

Tread with extreme caution.

## **#11 Dealing with 307 redirects on Google Analytics Calls**

Many times you will see that Google Analytics calls are duplicated or redirected when checked in the network tab of a browser.

As you can see from the below image, it looks like the status code for all Google Analytics calls sent via the GET method are duplicating.



If this is happening on your website, you must understand that the 307 statuses are not duplicate calls, but are redirects.

In general, redirects happen when analytics hits are not sent through standard Google Analytics via SSL protocol.

Long story short, if the analytics hits contain request URL with “http://” protocol you will find 307 redirects in debug console. This happens if you are using an Ad-Block extension.

The extra network calls are not causing any deviation to data being sent to Google Analytics but if you don’t want to see duplicate network calls try disabling your extensions and check again.




If you want to send analytics hits using the standard “https://” protocol you can do it in the following ways

### Use the forceSSL parameter in GTM

Add the forceSSL parameter with the value set to true in fields to set for every Universal Analytics tag in Google Tag Manager

▼ More Settings

▼ Fields to Set

Field Name		Value	
forceSSL		true	
			

[+ Add Field](#)

### Add a piece of code to your main tracking code

Set forceSSL for your ga tracker `ga('set', 'forceSSL', true)`.

The complete tracking code may look like below

`<script>`

```
(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){
```

```
(i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o),
```

```
m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(
a,m)

})(window,document,'script','//www.google-analytics.com/analytics.js','ga');

ga('set', 'forceSSL', true);

ga('create', 'UA-xxxxxx-1', 'auto');

ga('send', 'pageview');

</script>
```

## #12 Filters Set Up

Many organizations use filters in their analytics views to avoid traffic from unwanted sources. In general, traffic filters are set to avoid counting internal employees visiting the website.

Other analytics views created for specific purposes also uses filters.

For example, if you have created a separate view for the European region and only want to have data from the European countries.

Sometimes setting up incorrect filters also results in no data in Google Analytics. Make sure you set up the filters correctly and validate them in real-time.



Also, it is good practice to always maintain an unfiltered view, just to avoid loss of data. Be extra cautious while using including and excluding attributes of a filter.

You have to be very careful while filtering attributes.

## **#13 Blocking extensions: Ad blockers and script blockers**

Many users nowadays use different types of browser extensions which saves them a lot of time when doing day-to-day routine activities.

Some of these extensions are ad blockers or script blockers which don't allow the loading of certain files on the webpage and block files, particularly paid ads, display ads, and video ads.

These extensions sometimes block Google Analytics script and Google Tag Manager script, hence you see no data in Google Analytics.

Try to disable all these extensions while debugging the analytics implementation.

## **#14 Iframe tracking**

If you use iframes on your website to a larger extent you must know that an iframe contains its own <head> and <body> tags.

In other words, you can say that iframes are a micro-website (child website) within your main website (parent website).

Analytics scripts only load for the parent website and because of this, you will not be able to track anything inside an iframe, leading to no data being sent to the analytics tool for pageviews and events inside the iframe.

If you want to track the iframe you need to manually load the analytics script into the iframe.

**Note:** Loading the same analytics script in the main parent website and iframe may lead to duplication of pageview and event.

## #15 Dealing with website environments and publishing

You might use different website environments in order to test and validate the functionality of the website. The same happens with analytics as well. You can have a separate property or a separate view for each environment.

It happens many times while switching between the environments or publishing it to the production environment we forgot to update the property ID in the analytics script. This can break the current analytics set up and Google Analytics may stop working.

Always be careful while switching the environment and debugging its data in Google Analytics property or view for the corresponding environment.

## #16 Locally hosted analytics.js

Many developers try to host the analytics.js file on a local server. They generally do it for getting faster page load times and better website performance. However, this is not recommended by Google.

To make this work you need to set up a cron job to run the script at a specific interval, which can be every 12 hours or 24 hours. If you do not set up the cron job in the correct manner you will see no data in GA.

Another reason could be older browsers may contain an older version of the Google Analytics cache and hence current the version is still not reflected.

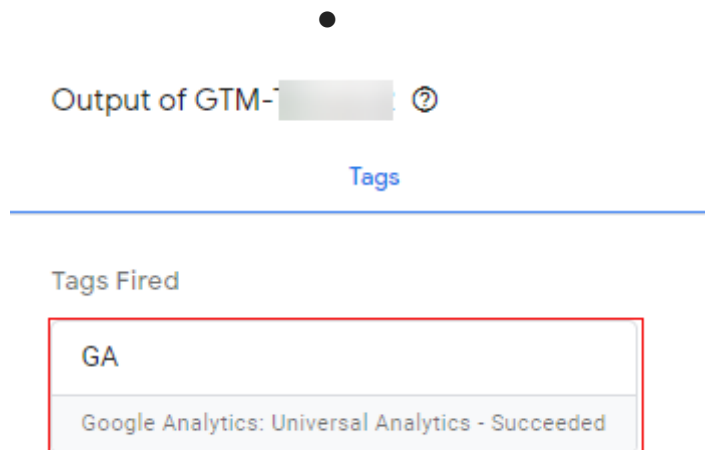
The best solution to this kind of problem is not to use a locally hosted analytics.js file in the first place. If you still have business needs to do it then you need to carefully do the complete set-up for it to work without any issues.

## #17 Google Tag Manager errors

If You are using Google Tag Manager for analytics implementation there could be multiple reasons why you see analytics not working or incomplete tracking.

A few of them might be as below:

- **Tags not firing:** Look at Google Tag Manager preview mode and check if the tag is firing or not. Make sure your tag is firing correctly and can be seen in preview mode.



- **Incorrect triggers:** There may be reasons where your triggers are not working correctly. You can check for trigger conditions and validate if it's working or not.

### Firing Triggers

✗ Logo Link Click	<b>Incorrect trigger</b>		
Filters			
✗	Click Classes	contains	qodeffullscreenlogo
✓	_event	equals	gtm.click

### Firing Triggers

✓ Logo Link Click	<b>Correct trigger</b>		
Filters			
✓	Click Classes	contains	qodef-fullscreen-logo
✓	_event	equals	gtm.click

- **Variables errors:** Sometimes you need to send custom dimensions and metrics to Google Analytics. Generally, if variables are not capturing the data correctly (set up error) then you will see no data for that custom dimension or metric in GA resulting in incomplete tracking.

- **Container not published:** Another reason for not showing data in GA could be the container is not published with the GA tags added.

## #18 No ecommerce data in the newly created view

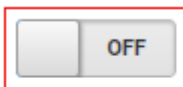
If you have created a separate view in Google Analytics you need to enable ecommerce tracking as well.

If you have tagged and are sending all ecommerce events on your website but are seeing no data in the ecommerce section of reporting then this might be because you haven't enabled ecommerce tracking for the corresponding view.

### Ecommerce set-up

#### Enable Ecommerce

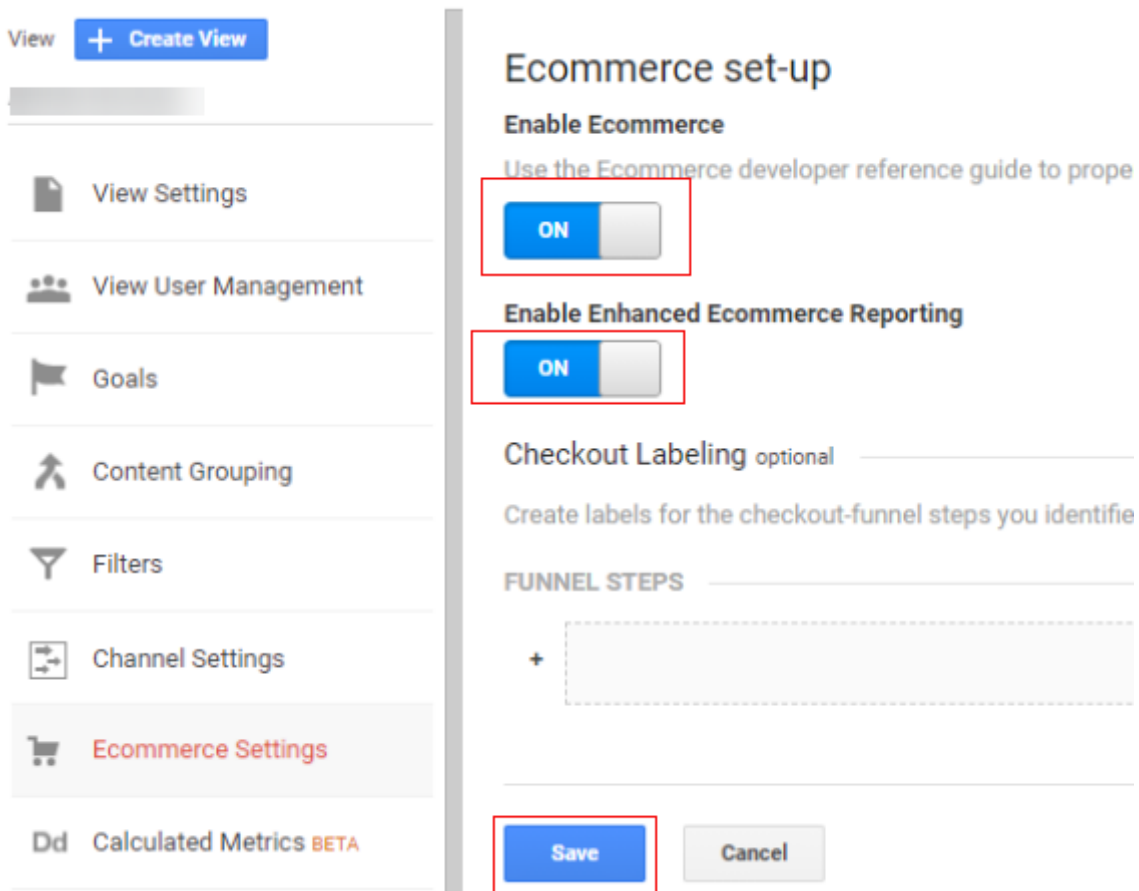
Use the Ecommerce developer reference guide to properly set-up the tracking code for your site.



Save

Cancel

You can switch the toggle button to 'On' to start receiving the data. You can also enable enhance ecommerce and then click on 'Save'.



## #19 Other scripts on the page conflict with GA script

Your website may have multiple JavaScript scripts running on pages. Sometimes it may happen that two JavaScripts are using the same variable resulting in a conflict that may break either or both scripts.

Sometimes this kind of error also arises from the cookies rewritten by other scripts.

The best solution to such problems is to use the analytics debugger every time a new script is added to a page and check for data going to Google Analytics.

```
Creating new tracker: gtm2
2 Aborting cookie write: User has opted out of tracking.
x ▶ Cookie write failed.
```

## #20 Incorrect placements of code

The placement of code is very important to track all the user hits and send them to Google Analytics.

For example,

if you are using gtag.js for analytics then it's compulsory to add the gtag.js code in the head section of the website just immediately after the opening of <head> tag.

If you add the code to the footer or at the end of <body>, a user may leave the page before the analytics code is even fired. This will lead to data loss and incomplete tracking.

The same principle applies to Google Tag Manager code as well, You need to add code to the website as recommended by Google only.





## Install Google Tag Manager



Copy the code below and paste it onto every page of your website.

Paste this code as high in the **<head>** of the page as possible:

```
<!-- Google Tag Manager -->  
<script>(function(w,d,s,l,i){w[l]=w[l]||[];w[l].push({'gtm.start':  
new Date().getTime(),event:'gtm.js'});var f=d.getElementsByTagName(s)[0],  
j=d.createElement(s),dl=l!='dataLayer'?'&l='+l:'';j.async=true;j.src=  
'https://www.googletagmanager.com/gtm.js?id='+i+dl;f.parentNode.insertBefore(j,f);  
})(window,document,'script','dataLayer','GTM-TLH4SJR');</script>  
<!-- End Google Tag Manager -->
```



Additionally, paste this code immediately after the opening **<body>** tag:

```
<!-- Google Tag Manager (noscript) -->  
<noscript><iframe src="https://www.googletagmanager.com/ns.html?id=GTM-TLH4SJR"  
height="0" width="0" style="display:none;visibility:hidden"></iframe></noscript>  
<!-- End Google Tag Manager (noscript) -->
```



For more information about installing the Google Tag Manager snippet, visit our [Quick Start Guide](#).

OK

## #21 Avoid using plugins for Google Analytics implementation

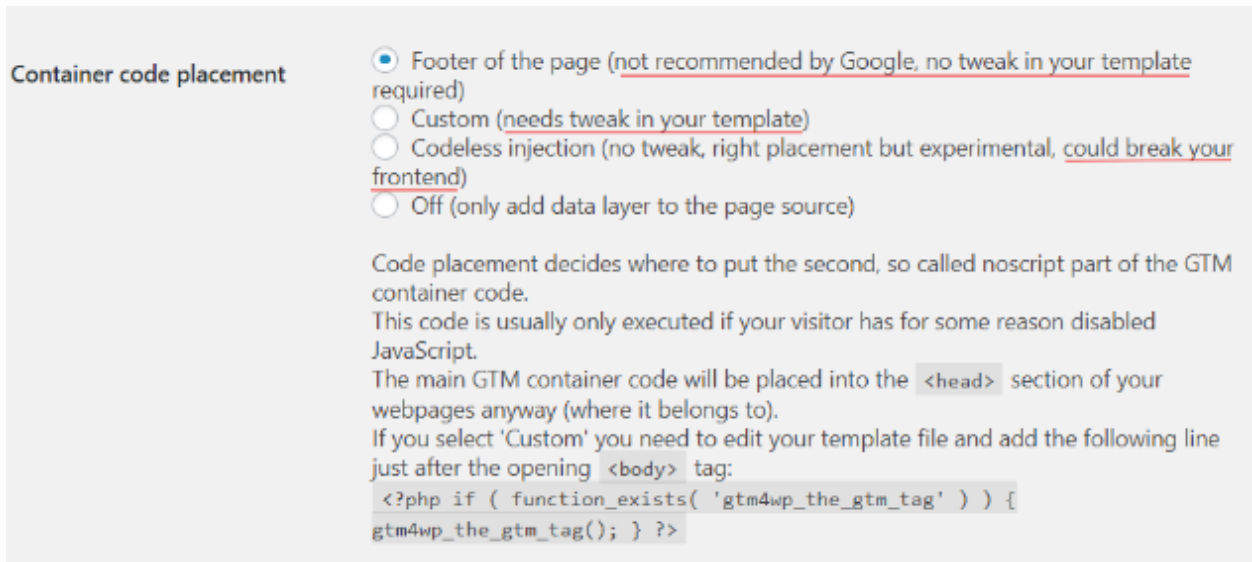
If you are using a WordPress website, you get multiple options to implement Google Analytics code or GTM code on a website.

This can be done by using available plugins. I am not a big fan of using plugins and use them only when it is absolutely necessary.

The biggest downside of using a plugin is the lack of control over the code placed on your website by the plugin. Another minor issue is that the use of plugins negatively impacts your [WordPress website speed](#).

So, I try to minimize the use of plugins, wherever I can. Sometimes a user may leave the page even before the plugin is initiated leading to no data capture.

This happens if we are using a plugin for code placement.



**Container code placement**

- Footer of the page (not recommended by Google, no tweak in your template required)
- Custom (needs tweak in your template)
- Codeless injection (no tweak, right placement but experimental, could break your frontend)
- Off (only add data layer to the page source)

Code placement decides where to put the second, so called noscript part of the GTM container code.  
This code is usually only executed if your visitor has for some reason disabled JavaScript.  
The main GTM container code will be placed into the `<head>` section of your webpages anyway (where it belongs to).  
If you select 'Custom' you need to edit your template file and add the following line just after the opening `<body>` tag:

```
<?php if ( function_exists( 'gtm4wp_the_gtm_tag' ) ) {  
gtm4wp_the_gtm_tag(); } ?>
```

As you can see from the above image, every code placement option available has some pros and cons available.

- Footer: Not Recommended by Google.
- Custom: Needs a tweak in the template file (changes website theme code).
- Codeless injection: Can break the front end.

# 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'.

**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