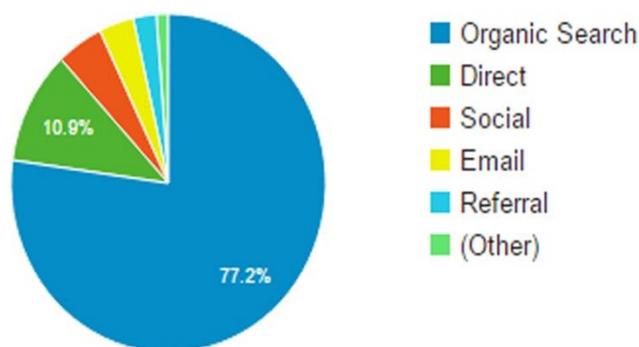


# Google Analytics Health Check

Collect Data You Can Trust

Top Channels



Conversions



By Paul Koks

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# 1. The Difference Between Success and Failure

First of all, thank you for downloading my eBook. You made a great choice!

The difference between succeeding and not succeeding with Google Analytics comes down to three things:

1. Setting up Google Analytics in the right way
2. Translating your data into insights
3. Acting on your insights and making extra money

The truth is... if you don't get the setup right, you will *never* make more money through web analytics.

How can you expect your website ROI to improve, if you measure things wrong or the wrong things?

In the last 10 years I have done many Google Analytics audits, data analysis and optimization projects.

What I remember most?

At least 90% of the Google Analytics accounts are not properly configured.

And this number doesn't only apply to small websites.

That's why I have created this extensive checklist for you.

It might look daunting, but [at the end I summarize the most important things you need to do to get started with Google Analytics.](#)

The checklist is also divided in "beginner" and "advanced" items.

I recommend to print out this document and keep it next to you while you go through all the different settings in Google Analytics.

## 2. Tracking Code

### Beginner

- Tracking code is up-to-date

*(You want to keep up with the latest features and be certain everything works correctly)*

- Every page on your website is correctly tagged

*(You will get incomplete and/or unreliable data if you don't measure the activity on every page of your website)*

- Tracking code is placed correctly

*(You need to get this right if you want to get the most reliable data and don't mess up the user experience)*

- Advertising features are enabled

*(You want to know more about your audience (e.g. age, gender)? Make sure to set this up (and adapt your privacy settings accordingly))*

### Advanced

- Multi-domain tracking is correctly configured *(if applicable)*

*(Following your visitors across multiple domains is crucial for optimizing the user journey across your entire eco-system)*

## 3. Account Level Configurations

### Beginner

- Account name is configured and makes sense to users

*(No comment here, you know what to do)*

- User permissions are set wisely

*(Be careful with the “edit” permission level)*

- Data sharing settings are setup correctly

*(It’s your choice how to set this up; at a minimum I recommend to share your data with other Google products & services and to enable Benchmarking)*

- Basic filters are created

*(It’s a must; having the right filters in place can be the difference between collecting garbage or valuable data)*

## 4. Property Level Configurations

### Beginner

- User permissions are set wisely

*(Be careful with the “edit” permission level)*

- Social settings are in place

*(Is Social Media important for your business? Make sure to set this up correctly)*

- Search Console is correctly setup and linked

*(A must for every online business; get technical SEO and marketing insights and optimize your organic performance)*

- AdWords is linked to Google Analytics *(if applicable)*

*(A must for every online business that runs AdWords campaigns)*

- AdWords Manager Account is correctly setup and linked *(if applicable)*

*(Make sure to set this up if you have an AdWords Manager Account)*

- AdSense is linked to Google Analytics *(if applicable)*

*(Make sure to set this up if you rely on AdSense for your business performance)*

- Ad Exchange is linked to Google Analytics *(if applicable)*

*(Only applicable if you have an Ad Exchange account as well)*

- Google Play is correctly linked *(if applicable)*

*(Does Google Play sound familiar to you? Make sure to link it to Google Analytics then)*

### Advanced

- Enhanced Link Attribution is correctly setup

*(Very useful add-on if you have two different links on a page pointing to the same location)*

- Session settings reflect your business

*(Leave this on “30 minutes expiration time” if you don’t know why you want to change it in the first place)*

- Custom dimensions are in place

*(Advanced feature; it provides you with loads of extra opportunities to segment on and optimize the website experience for your audience)*

- Custom metrics are in place

*(Advanced feature; you want to go beyond the standard measurements? This is the perfect feature for you!)*

- Remarketing settings are in place *(if applicable)*

*(You need to have an AdWords or DoubleClick Bid Manager account to take full advantage of this feature)*

- Referral exclusions are in place *(if applicable)*

*(This is only applicable to you if you are measuring multiple domains in the same property)*

- Organic search sources are customized *(if applicable)*

*(Are there any organic search sources that drive traffic to your website and are not correctly measured on default? Make sure to add them here)*

- Search term exclusion list is customized *(if applicable)*

*(Helps to count some search traffic as direct traffic, e.g. brand related terms)*

- Postbacks to ad networks are correctly setup *(if applicable)*

*(Don't know about Postbacks? No worries, only advanced users should care about this feature)*

- Data import is setup correctly *(if applicable)*

*(Do you want to bring external data into Google Analytics? This feature is a must for you)*

- Used-ID is correctly setup *(if applicable)*

*(Advanced feature: you are smart enough to figure this out if you are seriously considering to implement user-ID's on your website)*

## 5. View Level Configurations

### Beginner

- Raw data view (and other relevant views) are active

*(Remember to always keep a clean data view; mistakes (in general) cannot be undone)*

- User permissions are set wisely

*(Be careful with the “edit” permission level)*

- Appropriate filters are applied to data views

*(Very important, set up different views and filters for your online business)*

- Currency and time zone settings are correct

*(Easy one, but important to get this right to interpret your data in the right way)*

- Main conversion (macro goal) is measured and setup correctly

*(Make sure to measure and setup your most important goal in Google Analytics)*

- Minor conversions (micro goals) are measured and setup correctly

*(Make sure to measure secondary goals as well; they drive your insights and ROI)*

- Tie goal values to each of your goals

*(One exception, you don’t want to add a goal value to an ecommerce goal)*

- Default view is set

*(You don’t want to switch from one view to another every time you login)*

- Default page is treated correctly

*(Make sure to get this one right; unfortunately many people get this wrong)*

- AdWords clicks don’t vary too much from Analytics sessions *(if applicable)*

*(A huge discrepancy between clicks and sessions might indicate a setup issue)*

- Site search is active *(if applicable)*

*(Do you want to offer what your website visitors value the most? Make sure to set this up)*

- Appropriate conversion funnels are setup *(if applicable)*

*(Are you running an online shop or do you have another type of conversion that takes multiple steps to complete? Get this one right so you know where you need to optimize)*

## Advanced

- Calculated metrics - that reflect your business - are in place

*(Combining metrics in the right way can drive additional insights for your business)*

- Custom segments - that reflect your business and target audience - are defined

*(One of the most powerful features in Google Analytics; it helps you examine visitor behavior on a deeper level and improve your online ROI)*

- Custom reports - that bring together your most important metrics - are set up

*(Save time by combining your favorite dimensions and metrics in a few custom reports)*

- Custom alerts - e.g. to alert on tracking issues - are in place

*(You are not checking your most important stats every day? Make sure to set this one up to easily spot major changes and tracking issues)*

- Content groupings are active and reflect website structure and goals

*(A fantastic feature to see what content types or categories perform best. It delivers you with great insights on where to put your efforts in)*

- Channel groupings are modified and reflect sources that bring traffic

*(Get a high level and more accurate view of your most important traffic channels and how they perform)*

- Shortcuts are in place

*(Save reports with almost any customizations applied: filters, segments, secondary dimensions etc.)*

- Ecommerce tracking is correctly setup *(if applicable)*

*(This is a must-have if you sell products on your website; it delivers great, additional insights to the standard reports)*

- Enhanced Ecommerce is correctly setup *(if applicable)*

*(Do you want to become an Ecommerce Analytics Ninja? This feature is definitely something for you; it provides you with additional insights on your Ecommerce performance)*

- Smart goals are active *(if applicable)*

*(Link your AdWords account first. Then head over to the “view settings” and under “goals” you can find and configure “smart goals”)*

## 6. Data Integrity

### Beginner

- Data view contains website OR app data, not both

*(Make sure to set up different properties for your website and app)*

- Spam and bot traffic is correctly filtered out

*(Spam and bot traffic pollute your data; make sure to filter them out as much as possible)*

- (not set) as a dimension value is kept to a minimum

*(Are you having loads of (not set) traffic on one or more dimensions? Your setup shows clear signs of being broken. Exception: Safari (in-app) browser version) which always provides (not set) results.*

- Website activity is only measured on your hostname(s)

*(Do you have (not set) or unfamiliar values appearing in your hostname reports? Something needs to be fixed!)*

- Bounce rate number looks normal

*(Do you have an incredibly low or high bounce rate? It might be that your tracking code is fired twice or something else is configured in the wrong way)*

- Annotations are used so you can better understand the data

*(Setting up annotations will greatly enhance your insights; you can better examine traffic peeks and other stuff going on on your website)*

- AdWords tagging is done correctly *(if applicable)*

*(Make sure that your AdWords campaigns are measured correctly)*

### Advanced

- "Technical" query parameters are filtered out of the content reports

*(Filter out unnecessary query parameters in your content structure)*

- Negative effects of sampling is dealt with in a proper way *(if applicable)*

*(Be extra careful while analyzing your data if you have to deal with sampling challenges)*

## 7. Measurement

### Beginner

- UTM tracking is correctly applied

*(It's a must to measure every campaign in the correct way if you want to get a better understanding about what is working and what is not)*

- Email campaigns are correctly measured

*(If you don't correctly measure your email campaigns, how would you ever know and optimize your ROI from this very important channel?)*

- Site search is tracked *(if applicable)*

*(A brilliant feature that helps you optimize your content, products... literally anything you have to offer!)*

### Advanced

- Event tracking measurements reflect on-page behavior

*(You do want to know which pages perform best, but don't forget to measure what happens on a page)*

## 8. Where to Start

Here are the ten things you should do (at a minimum):

1. Set up a measurement plan and determine everything that needs to be measured and why (don't measure useless stuff).
2. Add the latest version of Google Analytics to every page on your website.
3. Link all other (Google) tools to your Google Analytics account.
4. Set up a raw data view (a view that contains no filters / data modifications).
5. Set up a list of filters and data views that are relevant to your business.
6. Track every link (with UTM codes) that isn't measured correctly on default.
7. Track major on-page interactions (button clicks, video activity, downloads).
8. Set up your most important conversion = macro goal (and goal funnel).
9. Set up your secondary conversions = micro goals.
10. Add a suitable goal value to each of your goals (ecommerce goal is obsolete).

This is not a complete list, but a great start for collecting meaningful data!

One last thing... I am happy to assist if you need a little help here.

You want to be sure that you collect reliable data?

And you want to capture more valuable insights to grow your business?

Learn more about my [Google Analytics Strategy Session](#).



### **Paul Koks**

I help online businesses set up their Google Analytics account in a proper way to help them make better businesses decisions based on reliable and valuable Google Analytics data.

Follow me on [Twitter](#) or connect on [LinkedIn](#).

## 9. Recommended Readings

### [How to Avoid Setting up Google Analytics in the Wrong Way](#)

Read about 10 mistakes and how to avoid them when setting up Google Analytics. Get this right to skyrocket your insights and ROI!

### [Ultimate Guide to Using Google Analytics Filters](#)

This post teaches you everything you need to know about filters in Google Analytics!

### [Ultimate Guide to Google Analytics Campaign Tracking](#)

Learn how to apply campaign tracking in Google Analytics so that you accurately measure all your campaigns.

### [The Ultimate Guide to Google Analytics Integrations](#)

Learn how and why to integrate a whole bunch of other tools with Google Analytics.

### [Why to Define Macro and Micro Goals](#)

Learn about the differences between macro and micro goals and why you should set them up both.

### [The Importance of Goal Values in Google Analytics](#)

Learn the basics of setting up goal values in Google Analytics for each of your goals.