

By focusing on your email marketing objectives, as well as using Google Analytics in conjunction with your email campaigns, you can gradually accomplish a much **higher return on your email marketing**.

This whitepaper will leave you with a clear path for how and what to track to see how well your **email marketing is performing**.

Tracking Your Email Campaigns

Provided Courtesy of:

InfoTrust

<http://infotrustllc.com/>

Summary

To know how well your email marketing campaigns are performing, you need to go beyond opens and clicks. You need to understand what happens after the users click on your links. Using Google Analytics, you can gain deeper insight into what your email recipients respond to, and what drives them to take action on your site.

Why Track More Than Opens and Clicks

You need to understand, as best you can, the value that each email you send out is bringing you. (If you don't agree, think about this: would you rather have an email that gets 100 clicks and results in 1 sale, or one that gets 10 clicks and results in 4 sales? The second option will bring in four times more revenue, but the click data would have you believe that the first email performed better.)

The Method

To get this type of data, you'll need to connect your email marketing campaigns with your on-page analytics. There are several analytics packages out there, but we will show you how to use Google Analytics.

Before You Begin, Setup Google Analytics

Signup for Google Analytics by visiting <http://www.google.com/analytics/>.

(Note: You'll need a Google Account to sign up for Analytics. If you don't have an account, Google will walk you through setting one up. If you already use AdWords or Webmaster Tools from Google, it's a good idea to use the same account for Analytics so you can integrate the data easily.)



The Process

Complete this four-step process every time you create a marketing email.

1. Write Your Email
2. Build Your Coded URLs
3. Send Your Email
4. Analyze

1. Write Your Email

Think about what objectives you want the email to accomplish. Do you want to sell something? Have someone read an article or watch a video? Have someone fill out a form? These objectives will guide your Google Analytics analysis later on.

When you write your email, make a list of links you will be using. Include all the links you plan to use: in the header, in the body of the email, and in the footer. Finish everything with your email design except inserting the links. When you are ready to insert the links, move on to the next step.

2. Build Your Coded URLs

Using Google's URL Builder, you're going to code your links so Google Analytics can track user activity originating from your email campaign. This will let you segment your traffic in Analytics so you know which visitors clicked on your email, what they looked at on your site after they clicked, how long they stayed, and if they bought anything or completed a desired conversion.

a. Go to the Google URL Builder

Go to www.google.com/support/analytics/bin/answer.py?answer=55578 to find the Google URL Builder. You don't need to login.

b. Fill in the form.

Website URL

This is the URL that you want the user to end up on. This could be your homepage, or a specific landing page.

Campaign Source, Campaign Medium, and Campaign Name

The three main variables you will want to decide on are source, medium, and campaign.

Step 1: Enter the URL of your website.

Website URL: *
(e.g. <http://www.urchin.com/download.html>)

Step 2: Fill in the fields below. **Campaign Source**, **Campaign Medium** and **Campaign Name** should always be used.

Campaign Source: * (referrer: google, citysearch, newsletter4)
 Campaign Medium: * (marketing medium: cpc, banner, email)
 Campaign Term: (identify the paid keywords)
 Campaign Content: (use to differentiate ads)
 Campaign Name*: (product, promo code, or slogan)

Step 3

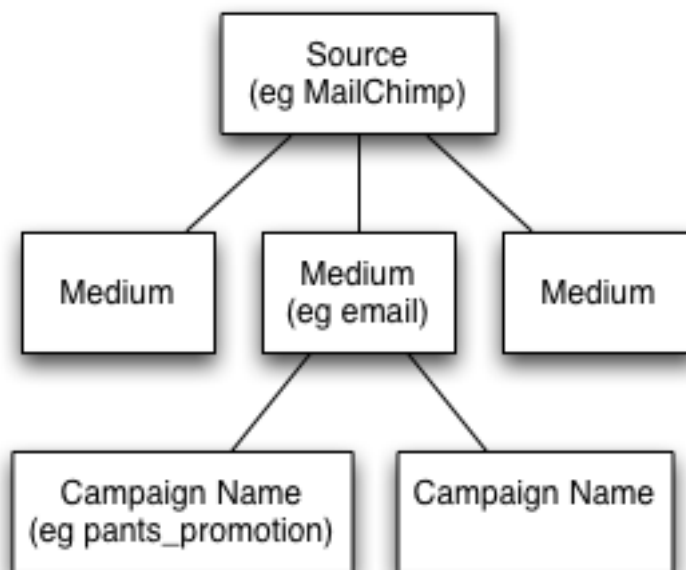
Source is used in Analytics to define the place where the visitor comes from (e.g. Google search). Medium is used to define what type of traffic came from the source (e.g. if the source is Google, the medium could be organic or ppc for pay per click). Campaign Name is used to further define a specific promotion, message, or marketing effort.

A source can have many mediums, and a medium can have many campaigns.

For example, let's say you use MailChimp as your email service provider. You are going to send out an email to your subscribers about a new pair of pants that you are selling. In this example, you could make:

- *Source=MailChimp,*
- *Medium=email or newsletter*
- *Campaign=pants_promotion.*

(NOTE: It is best practice when using the URL generator not to put any spaces in the fields.)



Use parameters that will let you see the data you want to see. For example, if you have an autoresponder sequence that is sent automatically, you may wish to differentiate that in your Analytics data by tagging those links *Medium=autoresponder* instead of *email*.

Campaign Term and Campaign Content (Optional)

Campaign Term: This field is used in Analytics to track the keywords that bring users to your site.

You can use this with your emails to track differences in the language of the links users click on in your email. For example, you may put *term=special_offer* to show when someone has clicked on a special offer link, and *term=brand_new* to track when people click on a link promoting something new. This is especially helpful if you have more than one discount or offer in your email and you want to see how users respond differently to different kinds of offers (e.g. discount vs. free shipping).

Campaign Content: This field is designed to store the content of an ad. You can use it to describe a specific link (e.g. *aboutme_in_footer*) or to describe different types of links (e.g. text, image). This field is useful to separate links that go to the same page.

- Click **Generate URL**
- Paste the Link into Your Email

Copy and Paste the link into your browser to check that it takes you to the desired landing page. Then, paste the generated URL in your email. This will be the link your recipients will click on. Repeat the process for each link in your email that needs to be recorded separately in Analytics.

BONUS: Tracking Links to External Sources

Sometimes you will link to other domains — an article at [wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com), for example. Google Analytics allows you to track clicks to external sites by adding just a little bit of code to your anchor tag.

```
<a href="http://www.wsj.com"
```

```
onClick=" javascript: pageTracker._trackPageview ('/external/WallStreetJournal);>Link Text</a>
```

The code above will display in your email as Link Text and, when clicked, will lead the user to <http://www.wsj.com>. In Google Analytics, every click will be tracked by a page view to `/external/WallStreetJournal` on your Content screen.

(NOTE: There is a more advanced method for tracking downloads on your site that is out of the scope of this paper. Please go here for more information.

<http://code.google.com/apis/analytics/docs/tracking/asyncMigrationExamples.html#VirtualPageviews>)

3. Send Your Email

You may want to send yourself a test email first to make sure the links are working properly.

NOTE: If you click on the links and you haven't setup Google Analytics to exclude your personal browsing, your clicks and views will be recorded along with your email recipients. This article explains how to exclude your data from Analytics. (<http://www.google.com/support/analytics/bin/answer.py?answer=55481>)

4. Analyze

Now you get to look at the data and learn more about your emails. Be aware that Analytics does not update its data live. To be safe you should wait at least 4 hours after sending your email to see if the data is being collected. To get a full picture of how effective your email was, you should wait at least 24 hours.

Analyze - Traffic Source Comparison

Let's see how visitors from your emails interact with your site compared with visitors from another source like organic search.

Click on **Traffic Sources**, then **All Traffic Sources**. You should see the Source and Medium you defined in the URL builder in the list. (If not, your email newsletter may not be in the top 10 traffic sources that are initially displayed. Increase the number of rows shown on the report by clicking the Show Rows dropdown, or just click the right arrow to see the next 10 results until you find your email source).

Now you can compare with other traffic sources. In the example below, you will see that 535 visits came from the emails, as compared to 105 from twitter.com. If you look at the second column (Pages/Visit)

you'll see that the email visitors viewed 3.20 pages on average — more than the twitter.com visitors. You can also see that the Avg. Time on Site is much higher for email visitors.

Using this data you may decide that your email users are more interested in the company than the people who come to you from twitter.com. Combined with conversion data, however, you may decide that you want the Pages/Visit for your email users to be less (e.g. you decide to put a link directly to a product instead of a link to your homepage so your visitors don't have to take so many steps to buy the product.)

	Source/Medium None	Visits ↓	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site
1.	(direct) / (none)	1,592	4.33	00:05:49
2.	facebook.com / referral	975	3.28	00:03:21
3.	google / organic	834	4.16	00:03:13
4.	Hyper (Newsletter) / email	535	3.20	00:02:44
5.	google.com / referral	133	1.86	00:00:50
6.	twitter.com / referral	106	1.43	00:00:25

Analyze – Top Content Viewed by Subscribers

With this tracking setup you can see which pages are the most popular with your email subscribers. This will help you determine what pages to include in your emails, and what to leave out.

Click on **Content**, then **Top Content**. This will show you the top pages viewed on your site. Next, we need to narrow the results to view pageviews origination from your newsletter.

Click the dropdown menu next to **Page** at the top of the results table, and select **Source**. Next, look at the bottom of the table and click **Advanced Filter**. Click the dropdown that says **Page** and select **Source**. Then, type in the source you gave your email links (e.g. MailChimp or Newsletter) and click **Apply Filter**.

Content Performance				
Pageviews 1,574 % of Site Total: 9.63%	Unique Pageviews 1,164 % of Site Total: 9.29%	Avg. Time on Page 00:01:19 Site Avg: 00:01:16 (3.60%)	Bounce Rate 57.30% Site Avg: 49.88% (14.89%)	% Exit 28.97% Site Avg: 27.29% (6.15%)
Page	Source	Pageviews ↓	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page
1. /	Hyper (Newsletter)	246	206	00:01:10
2. /shop/	Hyper (Newsletter)	88	51	00:01:03
3. /2011/03/this-is-my...	Hyper (Newsletter)	86	75	00:02:43
4. /2011/02/training-se...	Hyper (Newsletter)	50	42	00:01:06
5. /hyper-tv/	Hyper (Newsletter)	49	42	00:01:11
6. /2011/03/hyper-ga...	Hyper (Newsletter)	46	42	00:01:41
7. /enroll?training=	Hyper (Newsletter)	32	20	00:03:10

Now you can see what pages on your site got the most views. If you used the method above, you can also track views of external pages and downloads originating from your email newsletter.

If you like, you can filter by Campaign instead of Source to see your Top Content for a specific Campaign.

Analyze – ADVANCED: Goals Completed From Email Subscribers

If you have goals setup in Google Analytics, you can now see how many conversions your newsletter resulted in.

This can tell you exactly how

much immediate value your emails are generating. (If you don't have Goals setup, go to <http://www.google.com/support/analytics/bin/answer.py?answer=55515>.)

With goals already setup, click on **Goals** in the main menu. Here you can view the total conversions for a specific period and your conversion rate.

Visitors completed 27 goal conversions in the "All Visits" segment



All Visits : **27 conversions**, Goal 1: Checkout Complete

Newsletter Visits : **4**

Conclusion

With Google Analytics and the strategy described above, you can get highly detailed information about your email newsletter and its effect on your business. Opens and clicks are still important metrics in email marketing. But that data alone won't tell you if your email subscribers are engaged or bored, or if your email resulted in 0 sales or 100 sales. You won't be able to compare how many of your subscribers are repeat visitors to your site, and how many are seeing you for the first time.

With better data, you can make better decisions. Consider all the possible explanations when you are reviewing the data. As mentioned above, it may be a good thing that visitors from email visit more pages than people from twitter, but it could also be seen as a problem to solve. By focusing on your objectives for your newsletter and for your business, and using Google Analytics in conjunction with your campaigns, you can gradually build a much higher return on your email marketing.

This whitepaper courtesy of:



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