

# How to Use Google Analytics to Understand Your Website Traffic

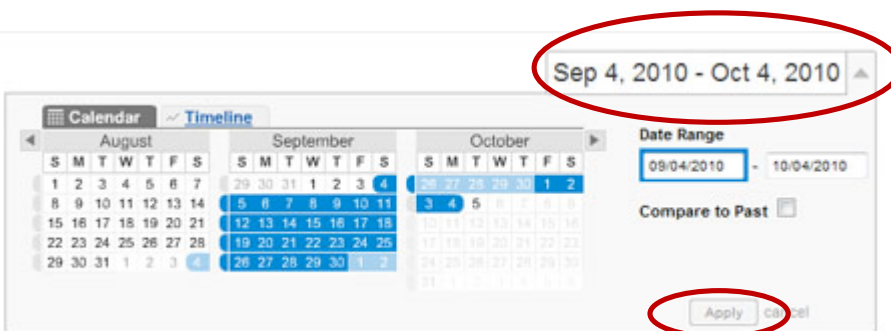
[Google Analytics](#) is a free and very powerful program that allows you to analyze various aspects of your website traffic. All you need to do is enter a special code into your website in order for your traffic to start tracking. Your stats update on a daily basis and you can view the details inside your online account. This guide will show you how to use many of its main features.

## Step 1: Understand Your Report Overview

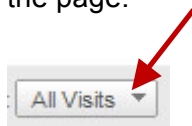
When you log into your account, click on the “View Report” link beside the website you want to see. This will take you to view your statistics.



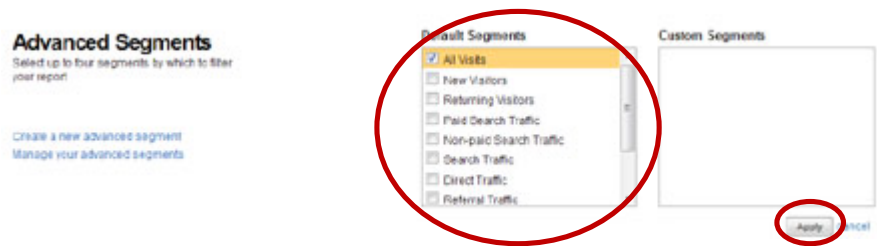
Then you will see an overview of your statistics. The default period is the past month and you can edit the reporting period using the drop down menu at the top right of the screen. Click “Apply” when you’ve chosen your report period.



You can also customize your overview by clicking the “All Visits” tab near the top right corner of the page.



Once you click it, you will have options to choose certain types of visitors and even create your own custom segments. You can choose to view returning visitors, paid search traffic, non-paid search traffic, etc. Click “Apply” when you’re done.



When you have chosen your segment (or left it as the default of “All Visits”), you can take a look at your overview. Here is what you can expect to see near the top:



This is a graphic overview of your website visitors for the report period. You can mouseover to see details of a certain day. In the above example, we see that there were 998 visits on September 16.

Next you’ll see an overview of your site usage.



Let’s define some of the terminology above:

- **Visits:** The number of times a visitor has been to your site in a 30 minute period (called a “session”). If a user is inactive for 30 minutes or more, if they have more activity later, it will be counted as a new session. If a visitor leaves your site and comes back within 30 minutes, it is counted as the same session.
- **Pageviews:** The number of pages that has been viewed on your site.
- **Pages/Visit:** The number of pages viewed, on average, per visit.
- **Bounce Rate:** The percentage of visits that viewed only a single page on your site. A “bounce” is a visitor who comes to your page and then leaves without viewing any other pages.

- **Avg. Time on Site:** This is the average time a visitor spends on your site. It is shown in *hours:minutes:seconds*.
- **% of New Visits:** This is the percentage of all visitors in the report period that visited your site for the first time.

Note, you can click through any of those statistics shown above to view a more detailed report. For example, if you click the graph icon beside % of New Visits like this:



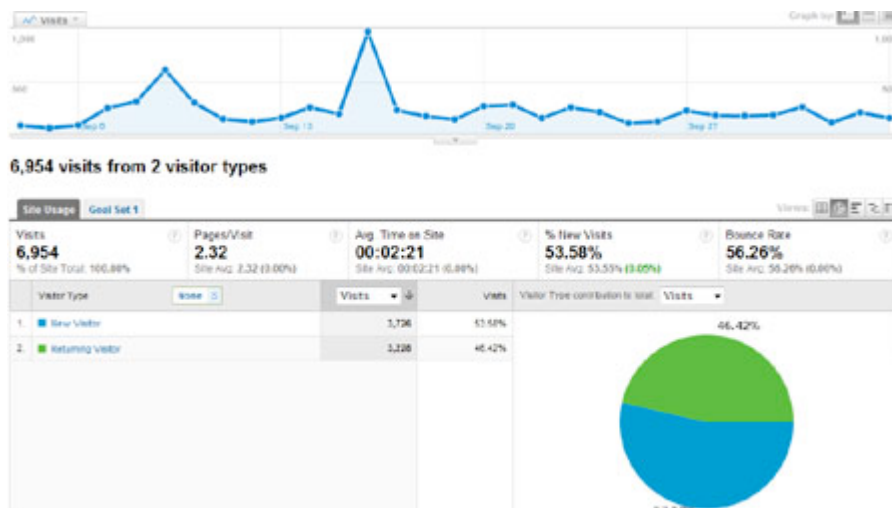
The graph at the top will change to show your % New Visits Stats. And once again, you can put your mouse over any date to see details:



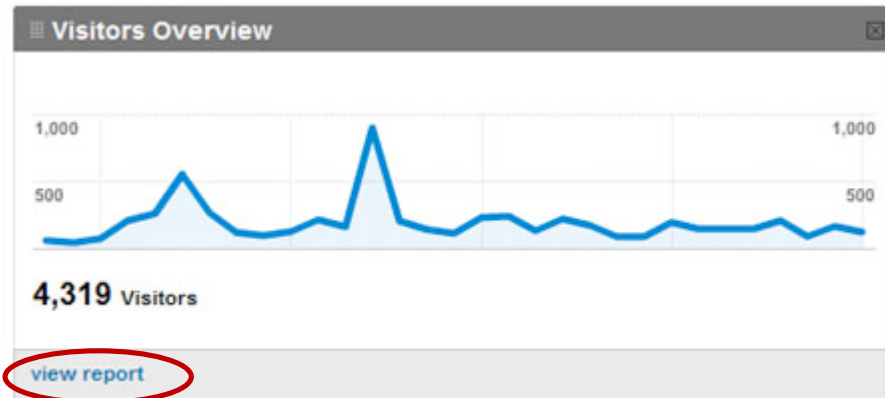
If instead, you decide to click the link on % New Visits like this:



You will then be taken to a new page that includes a graphic and detailed statistics on this report. An example is shown below:

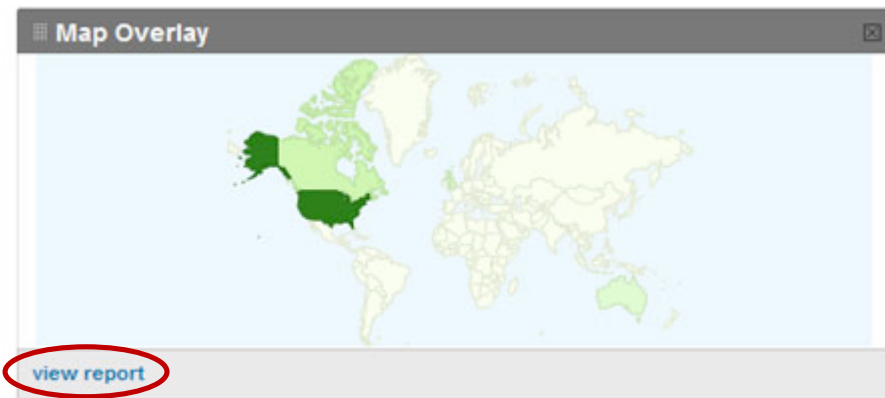


Going back to your report overview, you'll see a few other items on your main page. The next one is "Visitors Overview":



You can put your mouse over any day on the graph or click "view report" to get more details.




To the right of your "Visitors Overview", you'll see "Map Overlay" which gives you a good idea about which countries people are visiting you from. The darker the color on the map, the more visitors you have from that country.



You can click "view report" and you'll see more details about this graphic include the country names, number of visits, pages per visit, average time on site, % new visits and bounce rate.

**6,954 visits came from 95 countries/territories**

Global Level: City | Country/Territory | Sub Continent/Region | Continent [Download](#) [Reset](#)

Site Usage [Go to Set 1](#) Views   

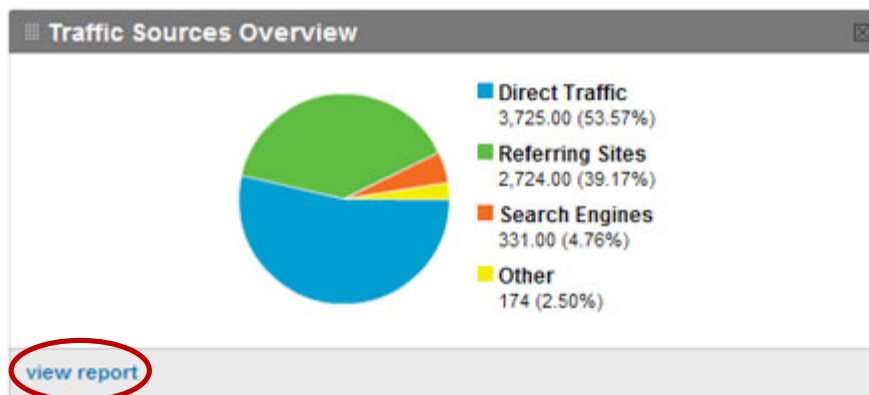
<b>Visits</b> 6,954 <small>% of Site Total: 100.00%</small>	<b>Pages/Visit</b> 2.32 <small>Site Avg: 2.32 (0.00%)</small>	<b>Avg. Time on Site</b> 00:02:21 <small>Site Avg: 00:02:21 (0.00%)</small>	<b>% New Visits</b> 53.58% <small>Site Avg: 53.55% (0.00%)</small>	<b>Bounce Rate</b> 56.26% <small>Site Avg: 56.26% (0.00%)</small>
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Global Level	Country/Territory	Visits	Pages/Visi	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate
1.	United States	4,523	2.28	00:02:19	53.79%	56.47%
2.	Canada	715	2.50	00:02:40	42.18%	56.91%
3.	United Kingdom	283	2.17	00:02:24	37.57%	56.02%
4.	Australia	231	2.25	00:02:34	50.62%	58.19%

On this page, you can also put your mouse over the map, to see the country details:



Back on your main report overview page, the next report you can see is the “Traffic Sources Overview”:



In the above example, we see that most of the traffic comes to the site directly, followed by traffic that follows a link from another website.

You can click “view report” to see details like your “Top Traffic Sources”. If you click “view full report”, you’ll see a more complete list of pages that referred traffic to your site.

### Top Traffic Sources

Sources	Visits	% visits
[REDACTED]	3,725	53.57%
[REDACTED]	703	10.11%
[REDACTED]	308	4.43%
[REDACTED]	201	2.89%
[REDACTED]	194	2.79%

[view full report](#)

The other report available from the “Traffic Sources Overview” page is the keyword sources of traffic. Again, if you click “view full report” you’ll see a more complete list of keyword phrases that people used to find your website.

Keywords	Visits	% visits
[REDACTED]	30	9.06%
[REDACTED]	8	2.42%
[REDACTED]	8	2.42%
[REDACTED]	6	1.81%
[REDACTED]	6	1.81%

[view full report](#)

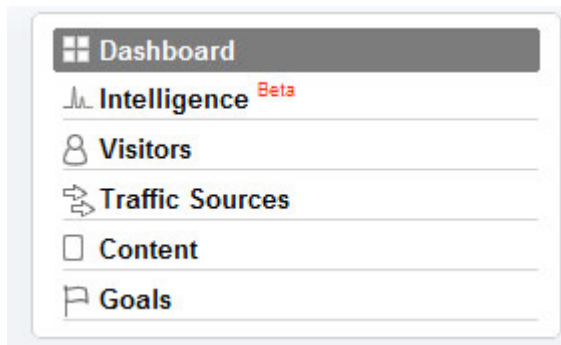
**Going back to your main report overview page**, the final report you can see on that page is the “Content Overview”. This shows your more popular pages on your website in the report period:

Content Overview		
Pages	Pageviews	% Pageviews
<a href="#">/amember/member.php</a>	3,280	20.30%
<a href="#">/credibility/2240</a>	1,805	11.17%
<a href="#">/free-swipe-file/2199</a>	1,780	11.02%
<a href="#">/better-content.html</a>	1,207	7.47%
<a href="#">/</a>	817	5.06%
<a href="#">view report</a>		

You can click “view report” to see more pages and their stats.

## Step 2: View the Other Features of Google Analytics

On the left side of your account, you can see a menu called “Dashboard” that offers you additional features.



### Intelligence

The first feature (currently in Beta) is “Intelligence”. It allows you to create custom alerts when certain things happen on your site. Click “Intelligence” and then near the bottom right of the screen you’ll see a link that says “Create Custom Alert”:

[+ Create a Custom Alert](#)

Once you click that, you can set up your “Custom Alert”:

## Create an Alert

Alert name:

Apply to:  and

Period:

Send me an email when this alert triggers. Also include

[Setup your mobile phone](#) to receive a text message about Intelligence Alerts

In the first section (shown above), you can name your alert, optionally apply to other sites (profiles), choose the alert frequency (day, week, month) and set up an email address or mobile phone to receive alerts.

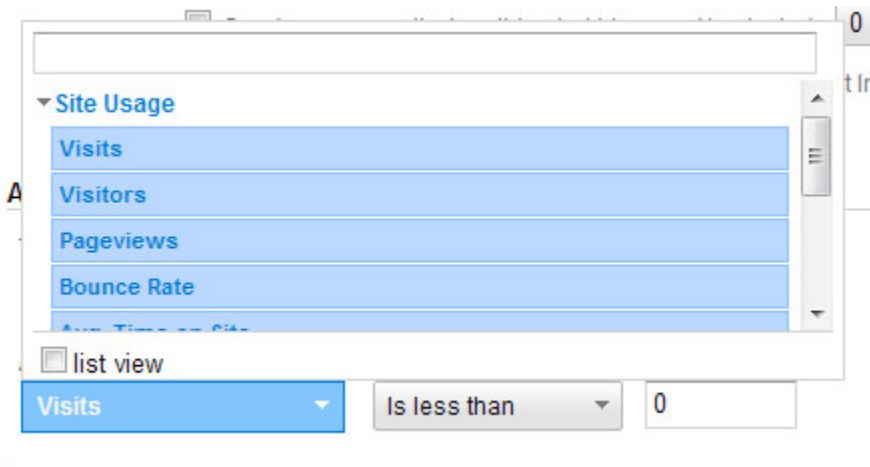
After that is complete, you can choose which traffic the alert applies to whether it's "All Traffic", certain segments, types of visitors, traffic sources, pages, etc.

- All Traffic
- ▶ Custom Segments
- ▶ Visitors
- ▶ Traffic Sources
- ▶ Content
- ▶ E-Commerce
- ▶ Systems

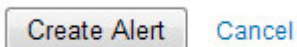
list view

All Traffic ▼

Next, you can choose when to be alerted of certain activity. For example, number of visits, pageviews, bounce rate etc.



Click “Create Alert” when you’ve customized all your settings:



## Visitors

The next item on the left menu is “Visitors” which gives you a number of stats you’ve seen already, but also allows you to see things like the language profile of your visitors, browsers, operating systems and more.

### Visitor Segmentation

- Visitors Profile:** languages, network locations, user defined
- Browser Profile:** browsers, operating systems, browser and operating systems, screen colors, screen resolutions, java support, Flash
- Map Overlay**  
Geolocation visualization

Another interesting report, you can see under Visitors is “Visitor Loyalty” and you can choose that from the left menu of your account:

- Visitors
- Overview
- Benchmarking
- Map Overlay
- New vs. Returning
- Languages
- ▶ Visitor Trending
- ▼ Visitor Loyalty
  - Loyalty
  - Recency
  - Length of Visit
  - Depth of Visit

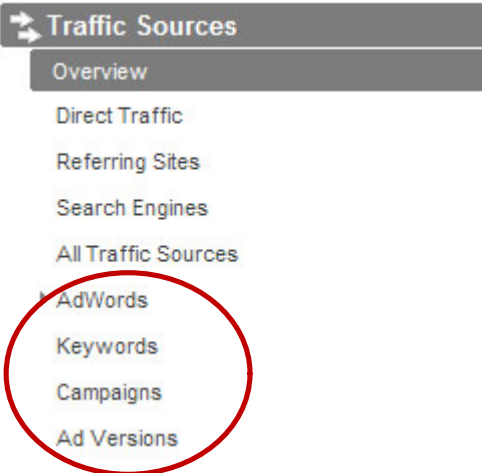
Loyalty shows you how many visitors visited your site X number of times. In the example below, 868 visitors visited the site 2 times and made up 12.48% of all the visits to the site.

### Most visits repeated: 1 times

Count of visits from this visitor including current	Visits that were the visitor's nth visit	Percentage of all visits
1 times	3,726.00	
2 times	868.00	12.48%
3 times	419.00	6.03%
4 times	303.00	4.36%
5 times	191.00	2.75%
6 times	147.00	2.11%
7 times	110.00	1.58%
8 times	98.00	1.41%
9-14 times	339.00	4.87%

### Traffic Sources

The next item on the left menu is Traffic Sources.



You will see some of the information we saw in the main overview page and some new items as well including the ability to track your Adwords campaigns and other campaigns (ex. Feedburner, Twitter, Facebook, etc).

### Campaign traffic sent 174 visits via 7 ad contents

Ad Content		Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site
1. (not set)	None	75	1.52	00:01:48
2. Twitter		70	4.93	00:10:39
3. Google Reader		19	2.11	00:03:27

### Content

The next item on the left menu, is “Content”. This section includes some of the information we saw in the main overview page, but also allows you to view your “Content by Title”. So instead of just seeing the URL, you see the site title as shown below:

Page Title	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page
1. Your Membership Information	1,938	1,148	00:02:13
2. Please login	1,860	1,467	00:00:44

You can also see your top entry and exit pages, but a particularly interesting feature is “Site Overlay” which shows you a visual of your site and where your visitors are clicking. You can click through to other pages and if you wait a moment, a new Site Overlay will appear.

Here's an example of a Site Overlay:

The screenshot shows a dark navigation bar with the following links: HOME (2.8%), FREE GUIDE (5.2%), PRE-MADE HOW-TO CONTENT, PLR, GHOSTWRITING, and ABOUT (5.2%). Below the navigation bar is the article title "Write the Things You Want to Know" with a small "1.2%" badge. The author information is "Written by [redacted] · [Print This Article](#)". The main text of the article reads: "The number one content writing tool I have heard time and again centers on the things that I know. Writing what I know means that I have a wealth of knowledge from which to draw. Although my life experiences and educations have left me with some interesting tidbits to pass along, I have discovered that others often are conveying many of the same messages." Below this is a second paragraph: "The best thing that I can write sometimes is that one thing that I hunger to know but just have not been able to find." At the bottom of the article content, there is a small "1.2%re..." badge.

## Final Thoughts

Google Analytics is very good at catering to the way you interpret data. You can also view your reports in a variety of formats including, from left to right below, table (text & numbers), percentage (pie chart), performance (bar graph), comparison and pivot (allows manipulation of data).

Views:     

There are so many features to Google Analytics and we've covered many of the main ones and some of the more unique ones. As you grow more experienced with the program, you'll see many more features that you find helpful including Custom Reports, adding Custom Segments and more.