

Google Analytics: Key Metrics

Users: New vs. Returning Visitors

New visitors are those users that have not visited your site before the time period specified, while returning visitors will have made at least one visit to at least one page on your site previously. This is again determined by whether Google Analytics can detect cookies, which indicate previous visits. If Google cannot detect a cookie one will be set for future recording, unless the user has disabled cookies in their personal browser preferences.

- Source: <http://www.boxuk.com/blog/understanding-google-analytics-definitions-of-key-terms/>

Bounce Rate: Bounce rate is given as a percentage, and represents the number of visits when users leave your site after just one page; regardless of how they got to your site or how long they stayed on that page.

- What is a good bounce rate? *It is really hard to get a bounce rate under 20%, anything over 35% is cause for concern, 50% (above) is worrying*
- Source: <http://www.techwyse.com/blog/website-analytics/improving-website-bounce-rates/>

Exit pages: Is a list of pages from which users exited your site. This calculates the percentage of exits based on total pageviews.

- **%Exit is** (number of exits) / (number of pageviews) for the page or set of pages. It indicates how often users exit from that page or set of pages when they view the page(s).
- Source: <http://yourbusiness.azcentral.com/meaning-google-analytics-exit-percentage-8637.html>

Time on page: Average Time on Page is calculated as the average difference between the request timestamp for that page and the request timestamp for the next pageview that occurred within your site. If only a single page is viewed during a visit, that pageview does not figure into Average Time on Page, since there is no second timestamp to subtract from.

- Similarly, Average Visit Duration is calculated based on the timestamp difference between the first and final pageviews that occurred during a visit. Since the duration of the final pageview cannot be calculated, Average Visit Duration as reported in GA is always somewhat shorter than in actuality.
- Source: <http://gatipoftheday.com/average-time-on-page-average-visit-duration-and-browser-timestamps/>

Referring sources: This metric indicates the where visitors came from. It can usually be drilled right down to referral path.

Search Keywords: Site Search report is found under Behavior and is focused on recording how people interact with the search functionality on your website. This is actually even more valuable since organic keywords started appearing as "(not provided)", as this report shows what people have actually typed, even if it is on your site instead of into Google – it's likely that there are overlaps!

- **Search Terms:** The words and phrases that your visitors have used in your search box are recorded here so that you can work out what people are looking for on your website.
- **Source:** <http://searchenginewatch.com/sew/how-to/2346116/how-to-use-google-analytics-site-search-reports>

Goals and conversions: A Goal represents a completed activity, called a conversion, that contributes to the success of your business. Examples of Goals include making a purchase (for an ecommerce site), completing a game level (for a mobile gaming app), or submitting a contact information form (for a marketing or lead generation site).

- Defining Goals is a fundamental component of any digital analytics measurement plan. Having properly configured Goals allows Google Analytics to provide you with critical information, such as the number of conversions and the conversion rate for your site or app. Without this information, it's almost impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of your online business and marketing campaigns.
- Source: <https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1012040?hl=en>