

Google Analytics for Websites

What it does

It collects, configures, processes and reports on data concerning how people behave on your website. It collects dimensions – which are things like page names, search terms, locations, languages, devices etc and puts them with metrics which are the numbers of how many instances of this dimension occurred. Dimensions can refer to the session itself or to an interaction as well as to the user. Metrics can refer to audience, behaviour or conversions.

Custom reports can be constructed from combinations of these.

These can be used to improve the performance of the site and your marketing overall.

What it looks like

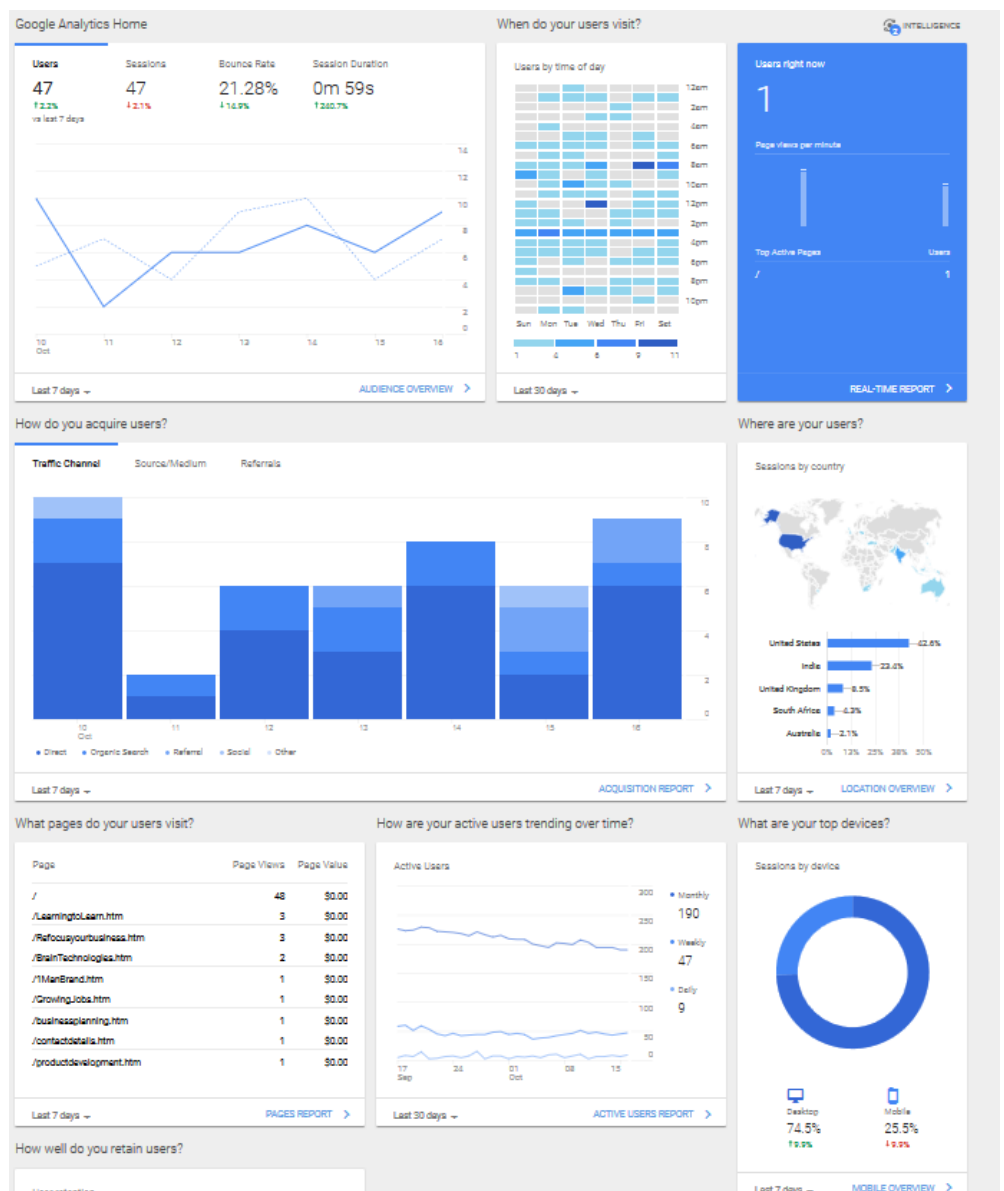
Google analytics presents you with a dashboard which tells you several things.

How many visitors you have in the last 7 days, what the bounce rate is, how long they stay on average, how many on the site right now, where they come from, what they've looked at, what devices they use and how are your active users trending.

It also allows you to track goals.

This can be a micro-goal – a step on the way to a sale – such as viewing a video, interacting with a button to ask for more information or it can be the sale itself.

One of the tasks we must carry out is to design our site and the flows between the different activities so that it's easy to measure.

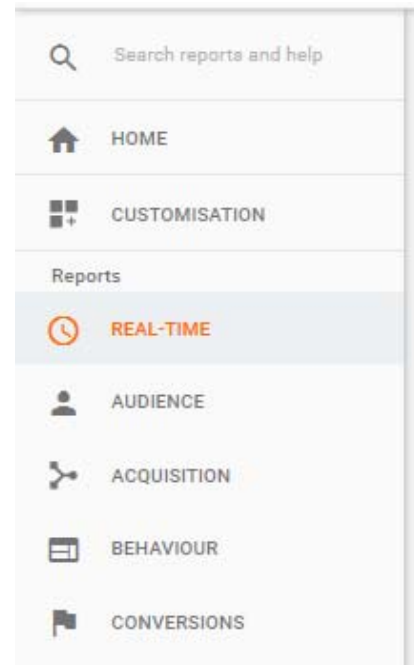
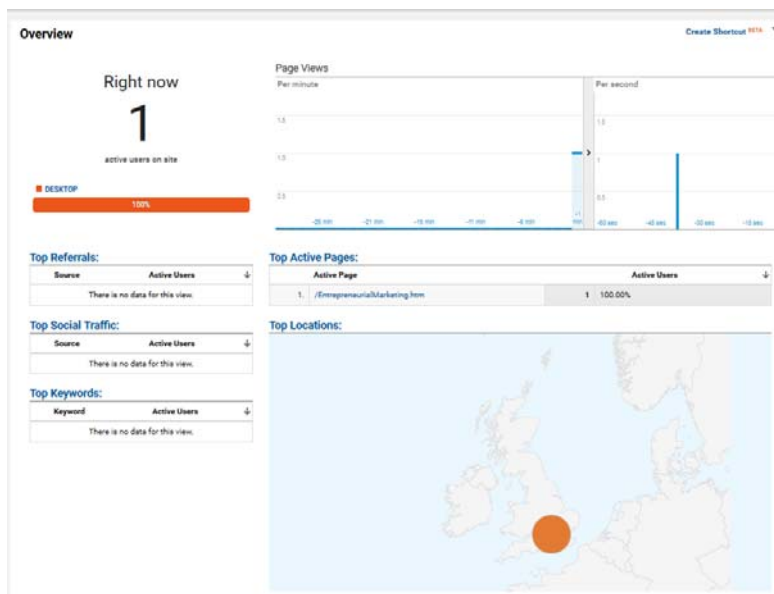


How it is structured

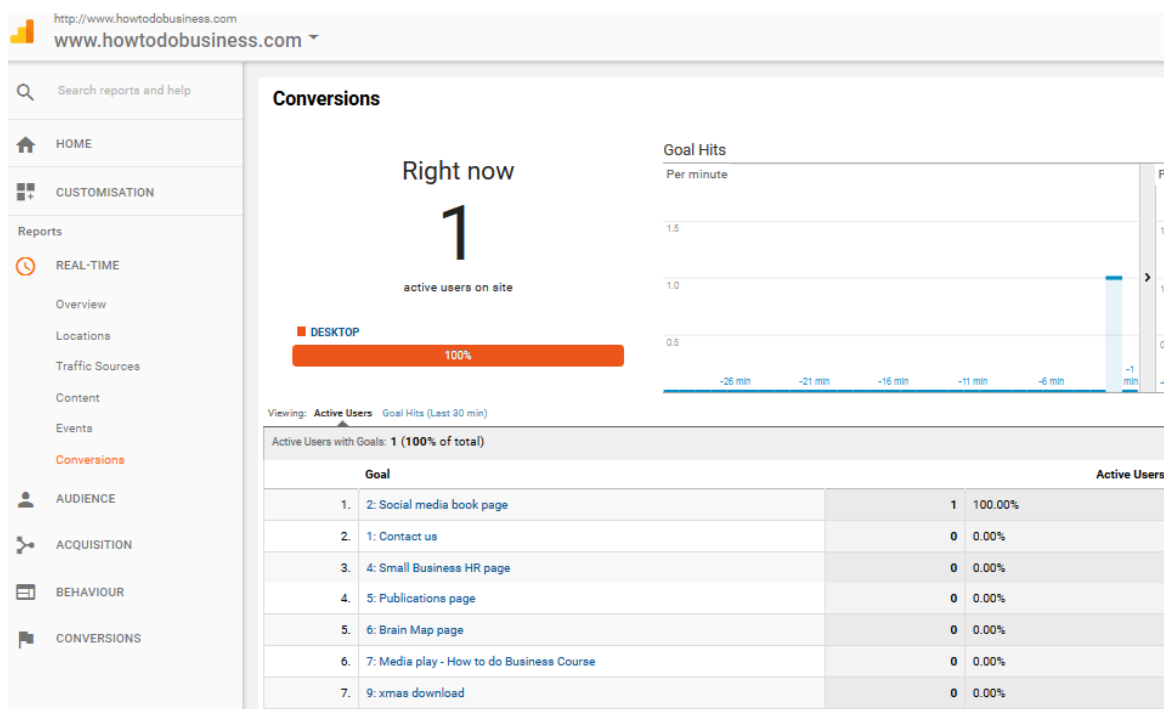
However, it is already structured to help you look at the things that are important, namely, acquisition, behaviour and conversion.

So let's have a look at how this works. This is the top level of the menu and as you can see it looks at what's happening now plus the audience demographics followed by sections on acquisition, behaviour and conversions.

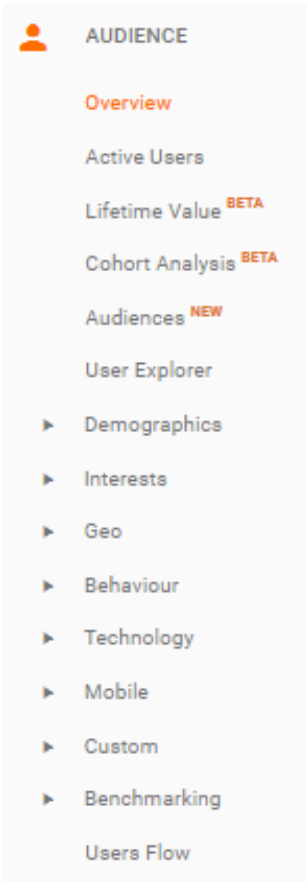
Each section gives you an overview and then allows you to drill down from there. The overview from the real-time section looks like this



Other sections that live under this heading are shown in the illustration below that also allows you to see what goals

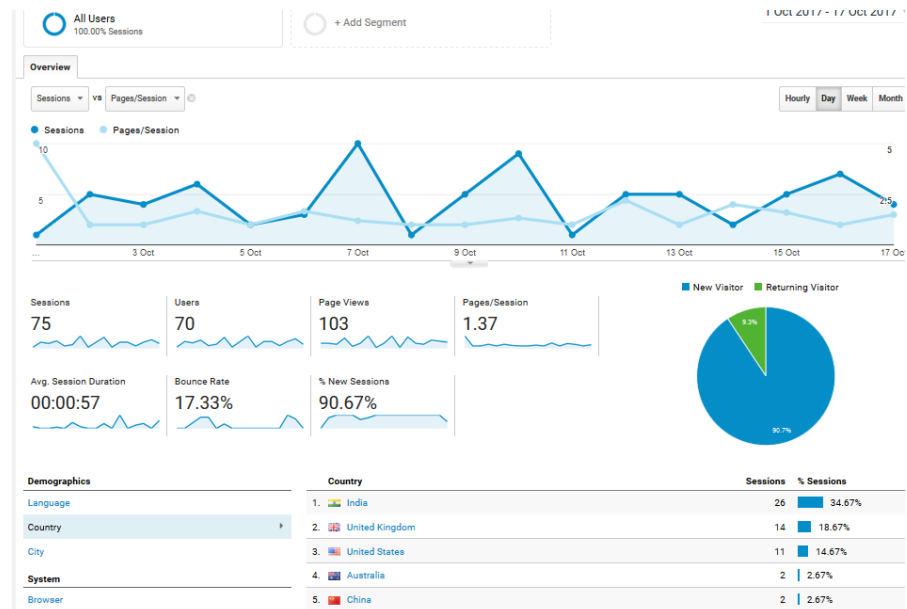


are being achieved in real time. You can also study Locations, traffic sources, content and events in depth.



The audience section will give you an overview plus detailed information about demographics, interests, technology used, geo location etc.

The default overview looks like this.



Its telling me how many visitors and page views I've had and what proportion are returning visitors.

I have added a separate line at the top which tells me how many pages per session and at the bottom I have changed the main dimension – qualitative information – to country rather than language. Analytics gives you a certain freedom to specify what's shown but works on a dimension vs metric principle.

Moving on to the other key areas that analytics covers they are Acquisition, Behaviour and Conversion.

ACQUISITION

- Overview
- All Traffic**
- AdWords
- Search console
- Social
- Campaigns

BEHAVIOUR

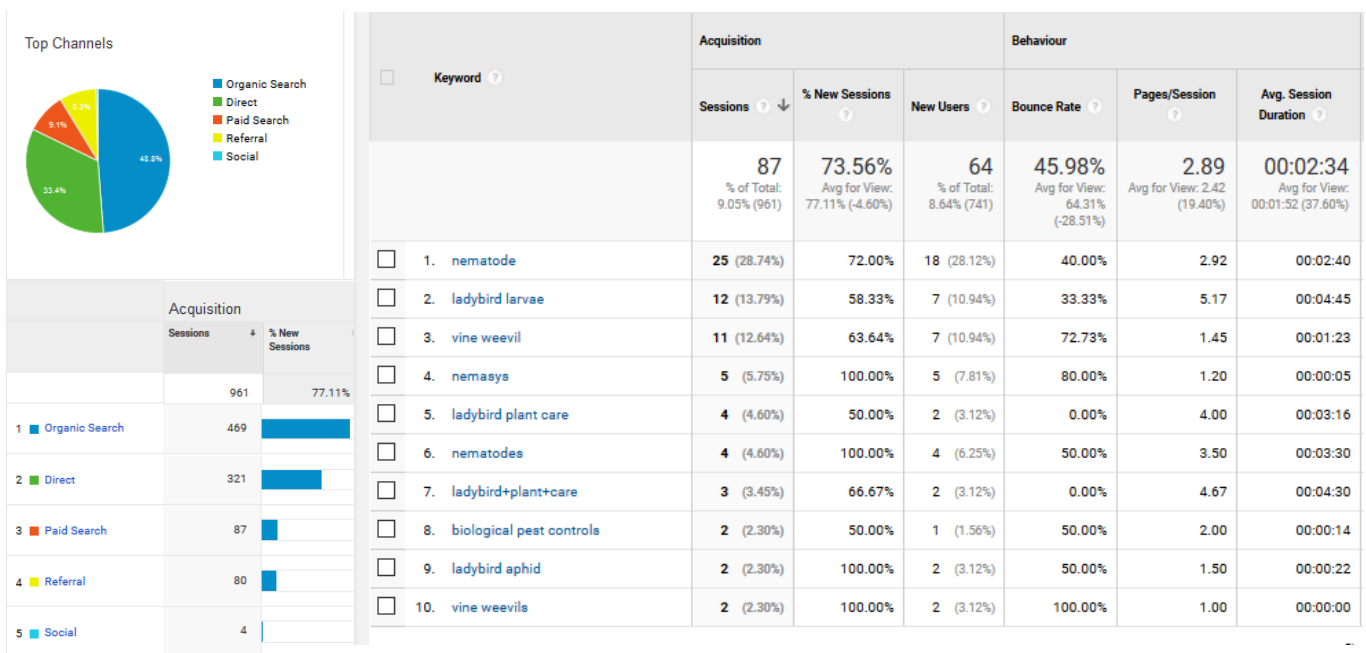
CONVERSIONS

Acquisition

This section looks at traffic, where it comes from and gives you information in detail about AdWords, social media activity, the results of campaigns you are running and links to the search console (assuming that you connected it) to give you information about what search terms are being used.

It also tells you how well they are converting if you have enabled the e-commerce analysis part of the programme.

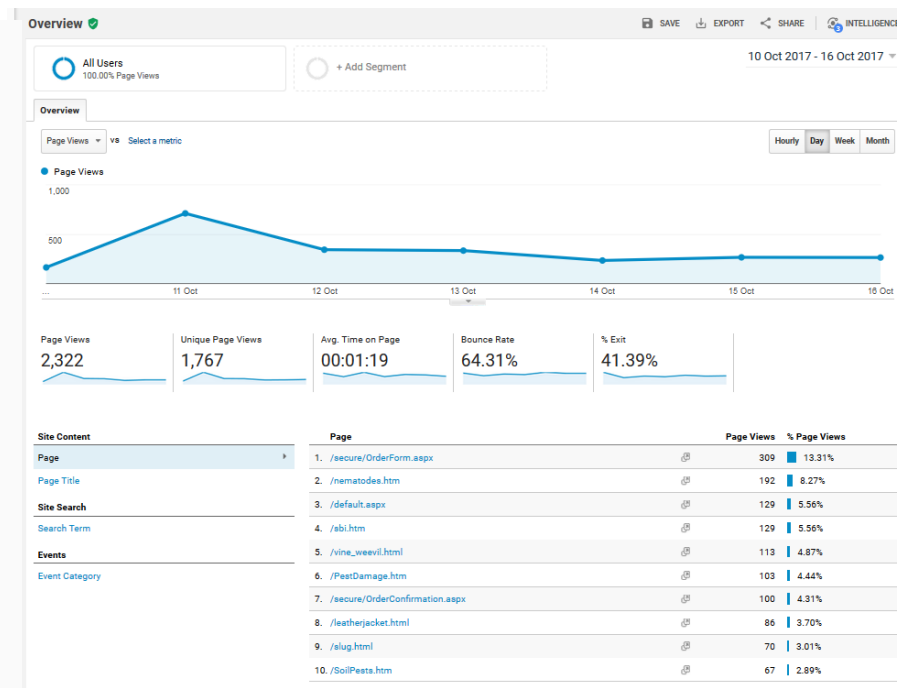
Here are a couple of sample reports from this section the one on the left tells us what the split between the different channels to the site are and the one on the right tells us how well certain keyword are performing.



Behaviour

BEHAVIOUR

- Overview
- Behaviour Flow
- Site Content
- Site Speed
- Site Search
- Events
- Publisher
- Experiments



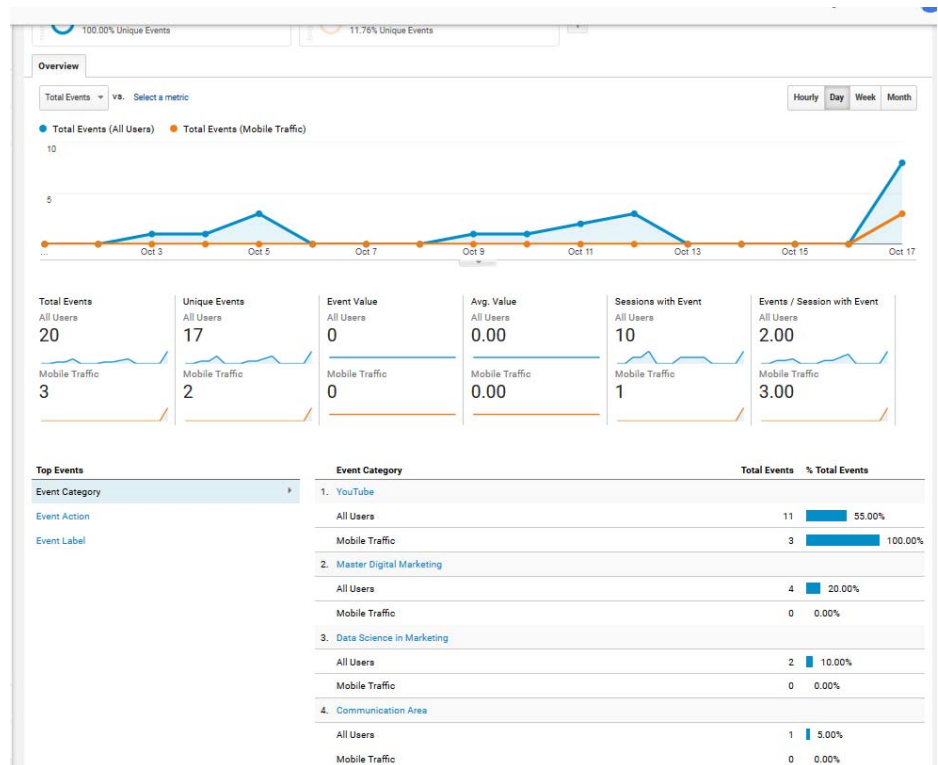
This tells us where people go on our site and what numbers. It also gives us information about events and gives us a space in which to run experiments via Google Optimize and to link to AdSense via Publisher.

It also gives us the opportunity to track events. Here is a report from the demo site.

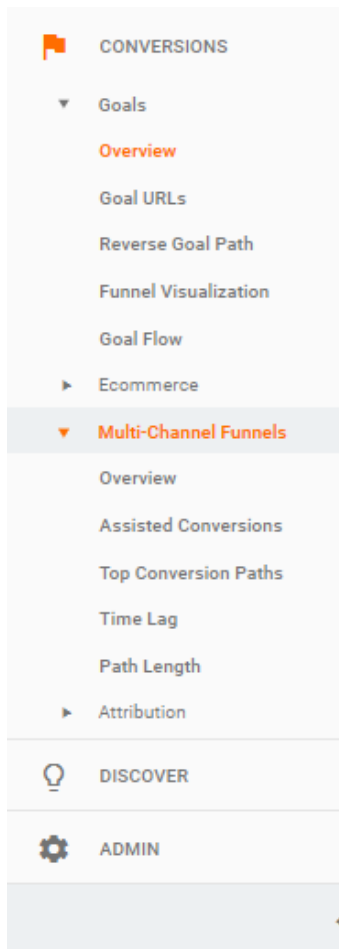
As you can see it tracks links, arriving at specific locations and video consumption. (It tracks starts, ends and change of resolution.)

I've also segmented it to separate mobile traffic from all users.

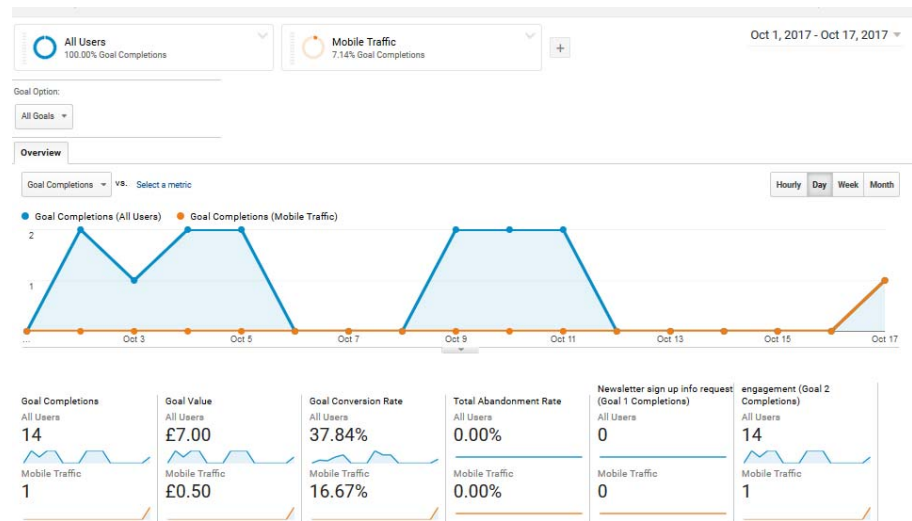
During the course you will be able to play around with the reporting on the live data in the demo site.



Conversion



As you can see, conversion is about goals and below is a sample report from the demo site.



Again we are comparing mobile with all users but you can see that it tells us how many goal completions we've got and as a percentage of total. It also is specific about the performance of each goal.

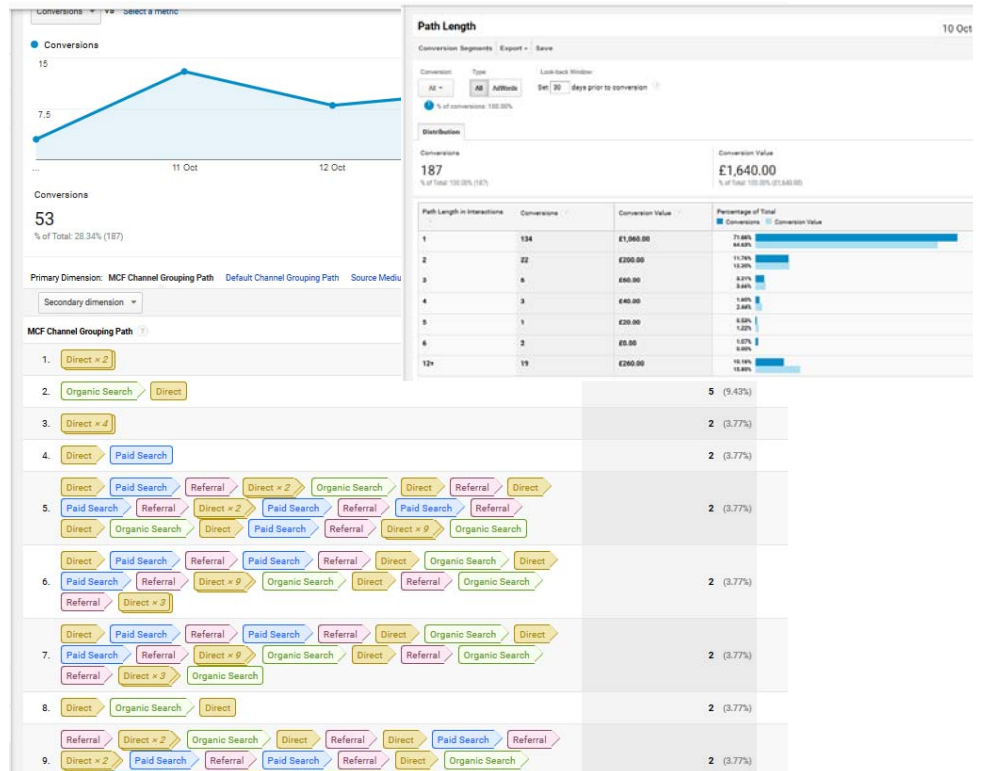
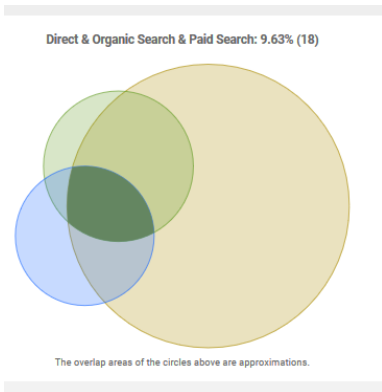
Two other things that you may note on the menu are very important. One is attribution. In order to gauge how effective your marketing is you need to consider where you attribute effectiveness in the process. Is it the last click, the first click, do you want to spread credit across the steps of the chain. The attribution area lets you choose the model you want to use.

The other major issue as we have discussed elsewhere is the need to track fragmented customer journeys. From the site to a store to back to the site and so on. Sometimes journeys are quick – 1 or two steps and sometimes they may have 40 or more. It appears that there is a segmentation available as it's a u shaped pattern. People either convert quickly or they take forever.

The multi channel function is how Google Analytics deals with this.

The reporting looks like this for assisted conversions and as you can see they are either very short or very complicated.

It will also give you a guide as to where the support is coming from .



Summary

So that concludes our quick overview of what Google Analytics does. As you can see it's a powerful tool and there is far more there that we have covered in this short paper.

However to get a complete picture of what's going on you have to work with your ppc and social media sources well as the information from any other sites you control that drive traffic to the site in question.

Finally, Avinash Kaushik – formerly a google evangelist – believes that to do the job properly you also must try and measure people's experience and we have attempted to do this in the demo site by including a questionnaire into the site. You can follow his ideas at "[Occam's Razor](#)" or read his two books, "Web analytics, an hour a day" and "Web analytics 2.0" both of which I recommend.

I hope you can follow through some of these ideas in the demo site and if you do come on the course you will be able to see exactly how it all works.