



# ANALYTICS CHEAT SHEET

FIGURING OUT WHAT MATTERS, WHAT DOESN'T, AND WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

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## ANALYTICS CHEAT SHEET

*As an FYI, this document is designed to go along with our video by the same name. If you haven't checked that out yet, you can view it on our private YouTube channel for members [here](#).*

*As a special note, this lesson is very different in that the video is crucial for understanding everything that's going on. The handout is merely meant as a companion for the video!*

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# WHERE DO YOU EVEN START?

For some of us, analytics are the most exciting part of our day. With that said, we've also been accused of being a tad broken at times, so it's understandable that not everyone shares our enthusiasm of graphs and charts.

There's a pretty good reason for that: this stuff can be overwhelming.

The sheer amount of data that something like Google Analytics puts out is... well, it's crushing, to say the least. For someone running a small business with no prior SEO or analytics experience, it can be a task that seems impossible. But it's not! Really – once you understand the basics, making sense out of analytics isn't that hard.

With that said, a minor caveat on this lesson: there's, quite literally, an endless amount of data out there, and there are many ways (and programs) that will analyze it. This isn't a comprehensive guide, and if anyone tells you that they have one, they're lying to you. Instead, this guide will talk about the analytics and tools that we use the most frequently with our clients.

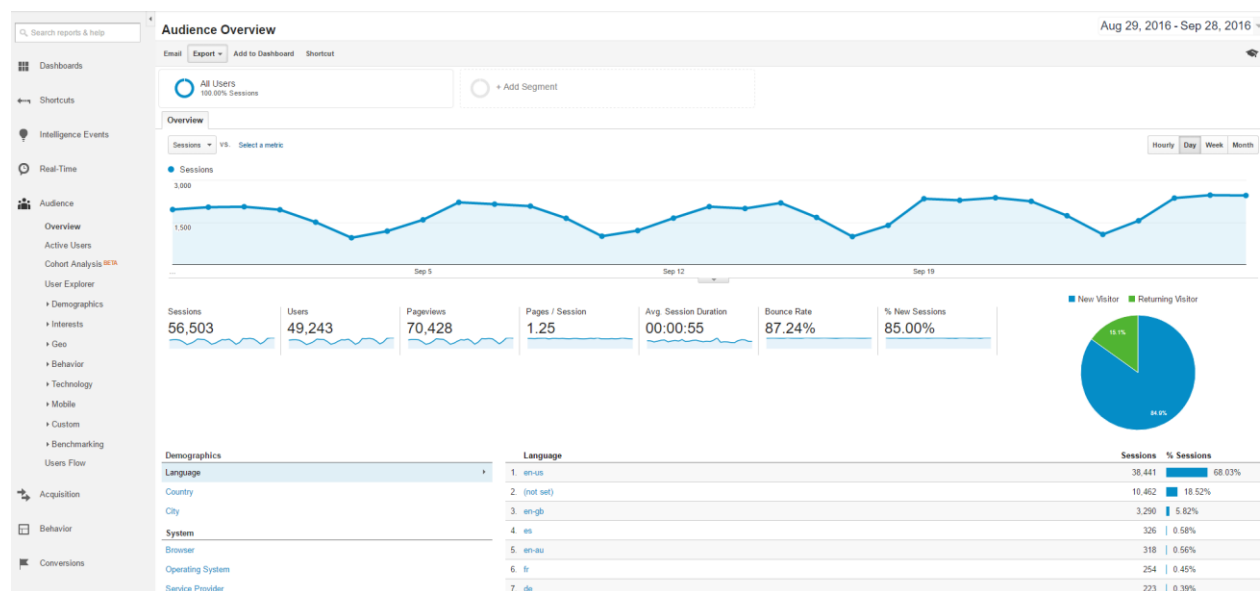
In this guide, we'll be focusing on two tools in particular: Google Analytics and SEMrush.

# GOOGLE ANALYTICS

Google Analytics is considered the standard for traffic analysis: and it's completely free. You can snag an account from [here](#). Setting it up is just a matter of making an account and copy-pasting some code onto your website. If you don't know how to do this, we suggest contacting your webmaster, as this is absolutely something that they can easily do for you.

Google Analytics tracks everything having to do with how people are coming to, leaving, and staying on your website. Google Analytics can help you answer a lot of questions, you just need to know how to find those answers in the myriad of menus.

When you view your analytics, you'll probably see something that looks like this:



While some of this will probably make sense to you off the bat, a lot of it won't. Before we get into the specifics, here's a quick break-down of some terminology and tabs that you're seeing:

- **Audience:** Audience reports tell you about your visitors. How old are they? What gender are they? What interests do they have? What language do they speak? How many of them are there?
- **Behavior:** What are visitors doing when they land on your site? How do people browse around your site? What site do they first discover (in other words, what is their landing page)? What page are they leaving from?

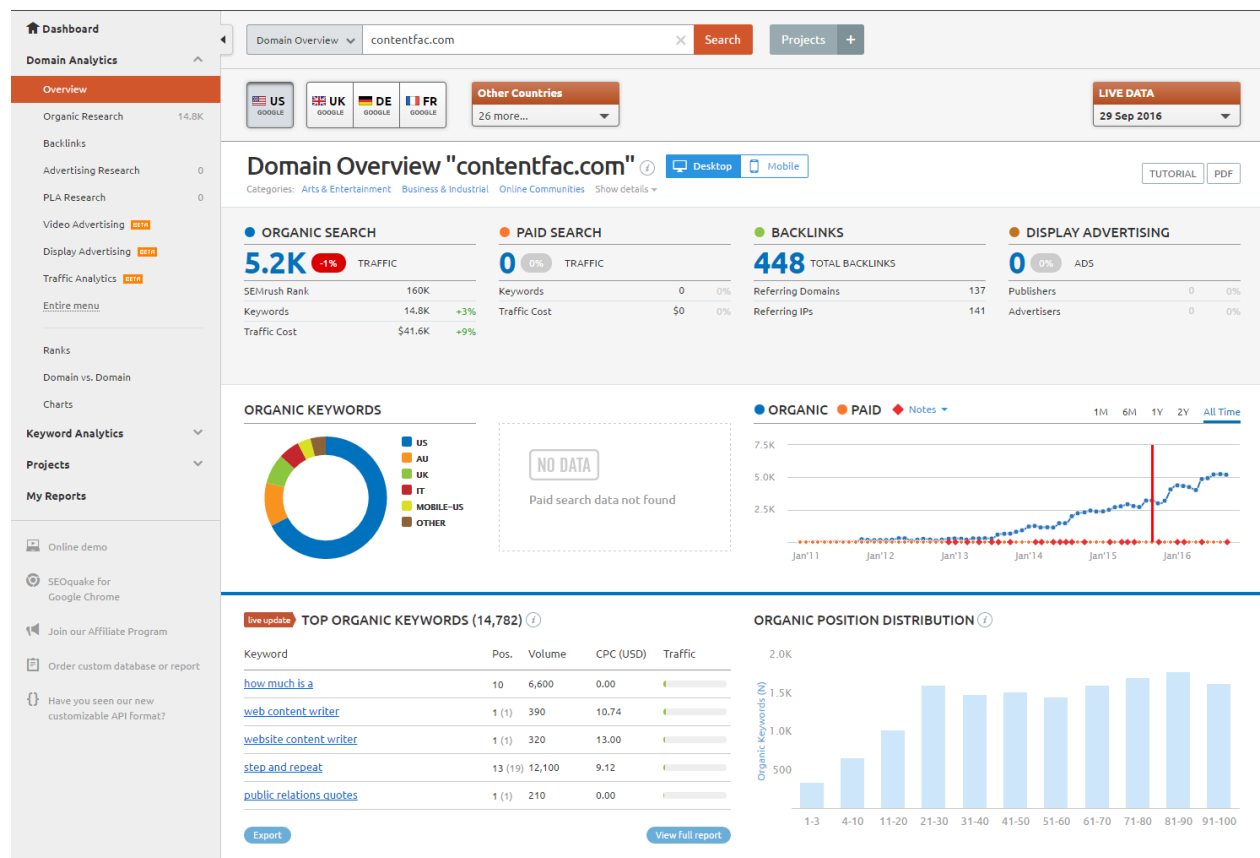
## ANALYTICS CHEAT SHEET

- Acquisition: Where are your visitors coming from? What social services are sending people to your website? What search terms are people using to find your content?
- Conversions: If you choose to set up Goals within Google Analytics, you can see how visitors traveled through your website to reach a certain “goal.” In other words, if you are selling a product on certain page, you can use Goals to see how visitors are getting there (and what path is most optimal for changing visitors into paying customers).
- Users: A “user” is a unique visitor to your website.
- Sessions: A visitor to your website generates a session when they first arrive on site. This is tracked by a cookie that lasts 30 minutes. If someone comes back after that 30 minute session has expired, they will generate a new session.
- Pageviews: A pageview or a “hit” is the simplest interaction a visitor can have with your website. It simply means that a visitor has landed on a specific page. If they refresh the same page, or if they leave and then come back, they will generate another pageview. Confused by users, sessions and pageviews? Read this:
  - Visitor A clicks on a link to your website. They browse around for ten minutes, accessing two separate pages before leaving. Later that day, about two hours after their initial visit, they visit your website again and access three more sites.
  - In this example your website has generated...
    - 1 User (They are one unique person.)
    - 2 Sessions (They visited your site, left it, and then came back later.)
    - 5 Pageviews (They visited five pages on your website.)
- Pages / Session: The average amount of pages visited during one session.
- Avg. Session Duration: The average length someone is active on your website before leaving.
- Bounce Rate: The percentage of visitors who navigate away from a website after only viewing one page.
- New Sessions: An estimate of the percentage of first-time visitors your site has.

## SEMRUSH:

Our love for SEMrush is... something special. SEMrush is where most of our keyword research begins, it's a crucial part of how we monitor our own traffic, and it makes scouting out keyword competitors a breeze.

With that said, it can provide an absolutely enormous amount of information. Here's what you'll see when you first jump on a search using SEMrush (assuming you are looking at a domain):



Here's a quick breakdown of what you're looking at:

*(Just a quick note – this does not discuss Video Advertising, Display Advertising, Traffic Analytics, PLA Research, or Advertising Research as these sections are either currently in beta or are just not relevant to this lesson series.)*

## ANALYTICS CHEAT SHEET

- **Overview:** By default, this is the “home” screen. As the name implies, it provides a quick set of highlights for whatever domain (or keyword) you are looking at.
- **Organic Research**
  - **Position Changes:** This section shows which keywords you are rising and falling in the ranking for.
  - **Competitors:** Shows who your search competitors are, how they are currently doing, and which keywords you share.
  - **Pages:** Shows which pages on your website are ranking for the most keywords (and how much traffic they are generating based on those keywords).
  - **Subdomains:** Only relevant if you have a top-level domain with subdomains under it. If you do, this section will show a breakdown of keywords/traffic by subdomain.
- **Backlinks:** This section shows you which websites are linking back to your website, as well as the quality of those backlinks. Here, you can see if the sites that are linking to you are considered to be of high or low quality.

If you're interested in giving SEMrush a try, use [this link](#) to get a free 30 day trial.

## WEEKLY CHECKLIST

Analytics only work if you're paying attention to them on a routine basis. If you aren't keeping track of what's going on, you won't be able to react to patterns. We suggest checking them daily, but if that's too much, it's fine to check on them weekly.

- How is your total traffic compared to last week?  
What about last month?
- How is your organic and social traffic?
- How many keywords are you currently ranking for?  
How many top 10 keywords are you ranking for?
- How is your last blog post doing?
- How are your three closest competitors doing?
- Finally, what is the value of the organic keywords you rank for?