Über Analytics

Customizing Google Analytics to track multiple library platforms

M Ryan Hess
Web Services Coordinator, DePaul University
mhess8@depaul.edu
The Problem

Do we really understand our users?

- Google Analytics is designed to track one web domain
  
  e.g. library.depaul.edu

- But many library websites span multiple domains:
  
  library.depaul.edu
  libguides.depaul.edu
  search.depaul.edu
The Solution

Customizing Google Analytics by:

- Forcing GA to identify other domains as your core domain
  
  libguides.depau.edu = library.depaul.edu

- Adding custom variables to GA to re-enable platform-specific reports
Benefits

A more holistic view of your users that can drive more informed decisions

- All your data in one dashboard
- Single view platform comparisons
- Tracking goals that cross platforms
How it works

```javascript
var _gaq = _gaq || [];
_gaq.push(['setAccount', 'UA-5169XXX6-1']);
_gaq.push(['_trackPageview']);

(function() {
    var ga = document.createElement('script');
    ga.type = 'text/javascript';
    ga.async = true;
    var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0];
    s.parentNode.insertBefore(ga, s);
})();

try{
    var pageTracker = _gat._getTracker("UA-5169XXX-1");
    pageTracker._setAllowLinker(true);
    pageTracker._trackPageview();
} catch(err) {}
```

//Set tracking to base report
var _gaq = _gaq || [];
_gaq.push(['setAccount', 'UA-5169XXX-1']);

//Set Custom Variable to Platform-LibGuides
_gaq.push(['setCustomVar', 1, 'platform', 'libguides', 3]);

```
```
Anatomy of Custom GA Code

Set to base “Über” report

Custom Variable IDs the platform

Force these pages into main site’s report

No really…I mean it

```javascript
//Set tracking to base report
var _gaq = _gaq || [];
_gaq.push(['_setAccount', 'UA-5169XXX-1']);

//Set Custom Variable to Type-LibGuides
_gaq.push(['_setCustomVar',
  1, // This custom var is set to slot #1. Required parameter.
  'platform', // The top-level name for our report. Required parameter.
  'sharepoint', // Sets the value of "Platform". Required parameter.
  3 // Sets the scope to page-level. Optional parameter.
]);

_gaq.push(['_trackPageview']);

(function () {
    var ga = document.createElement('script'); ga.type = 'text/javascript'; ga.async = true;
    ga.src = ('https:' == document.location.protocol ? 'https://' : 'http://www') + 'google-analytics.com/ga.js';
    var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0];
    s.parentNode.insertBefore(ga, s);
})();

try{
    var pageTracker = _gat._getTracker("UA-5169XXX-1");
    pageTracker._setAllowLinker(true);
    pageTracker._trackPageview();
} catch(err) {}```
Issues

- All sites become identified with main site’s domain
  - e.g. libguides.depaul.edu = library.depaul.edu

- URL filters need to rely on directories after the base URL
  - e.g. for ContentDM we use this filter “/cdm/”
  - e.g. for LibGuides we rely on a filter “.php”

- **Important** – We found custom variables the best way to identify each platform to resolve the above issue.
All in one Über dashboard
## Platform Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Website (Collage)</td>
<td>184,441</td>
<td>69.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ContentDM</td>
<td>2,353</td>
<td>0.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LibGuides</td>
<td>17,788</td>
<td>6.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Collections</td>
<td>3,012</td>
<td>1.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WebVoyage</td>
<td>27,782</td>
<td>10.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSA</td>
<td>3,306</td>
<td>1.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial Solutions</td>
<td>8,293</td>
<td>3.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Site Pageviews</td>
<td>3,178</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multiple Search Comparison

Catalog Pageviews
47,749
% of Total: 12.63% (378,027)

GSA Pageviews
5,869
% of Total: 1.55% (378,027)

SS Journal Searches (Pageviews)
25,715
% of Total: 6.80% (378,027)

Catalog Searches (13%)
Google Site Searches (2%)
Serial Solutions Searches (7%)
Using the Data: Site Redesign

During a site redesign, we could easily compare apples-to-apples data on the top 20 pages from across our platforms in one Content Report.

Results:
1. Homepage
2. Serial Solutions Journal Search
3. LibGuides
4. Library Catalog
5. A-Z Database List
6. Hours
7. Course Reserves
Using the Data: Multi-platform goals

How users reach our LibGuides?

Is our work seeding recommended results in Site Search worth the effort?

Results:

1. 11% of visits are to LibGuides
2. 6% use Site Search to reach LibGuides

Takeaway: Keep up the good work!
Conclusion

Customizing Google Code to track all domains:

- Makes analysis so much easier
- Allows tracking goals across platforms
- Gives you a holistic view of your users
DePaul University Library
Web Services Team

This project was a collaborative effort involving the following individuals.

- M Ryan Hess, Web Services Coordinator
- Jim LeFager, Web Applications Librarian
- Andy Chi Hang Wong, Student Developer