TACTIC LAB

5 GA4 TIPS FOR
DATA / TECH TEAMS

GA4 FOR
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With GA4's event model, Google is essentially making its flagship analytics product more enterprise-level. GA4 is now easier to integrate with other products, easier to automate tasks in and more suitable generally for data teams. Making use of the free BigQuery integration opens up a huge number of possibilities for integrating with the rest of your data stack.
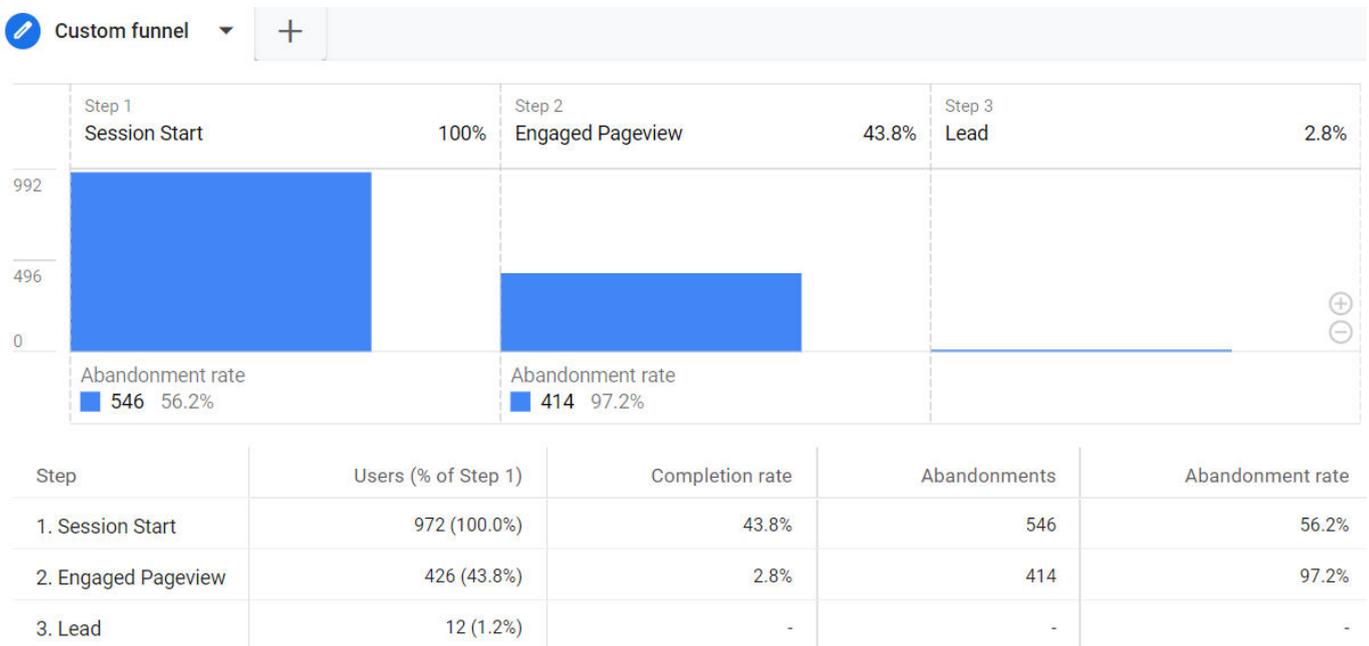

[Image Credit]

WHAT IS GA4?

Google Analytics 4 (GA4) is the latest release of the free website tracking software, Google Analytics.

Google Analytics is a free service that allows you to track any traffic and engagement that happens across your websites, apps and offline. GA4 contains lots of new updates, including how data is tracked and stored, with the overall goal to give a better view of today's marketing landscape, while also providing more control around data management and privacy.

Step	Users (% of Step 1)	Completion rate	Abandonments	Abandonment rate
1. Session Start	972 (100.0%)	43.8%	546	56.2%
2. Engaged Pageview	426 (43.8%)	2.8%	414	97.2%
3. Lead	12 (1.2%)	-	-	-

TIP #1

REMOVE PERSONAL INFORMATION

It's against Google's terms of service to send any personally-identifiable information to GA4. The most likely culprit is people's names/emails/mobiles showing up as URL parameters on transactional pages. You should use Google Tag Manager to redact these before they're sent to GA4. See our article for more information. You should also set up some reports to monitor this in case a new process/tool overcomes your filters.

TIP #2

FLATTEN GA4 BIGQUERY TABLES

The tables that GA4 provides in BigQuery are nested meaning querying the data is more complex and expensive. Flattening the tables allows the unnest to occur only one time and you'll have access to your data far more cleanly. Quick manual queries become easy and automated report generation costs less. See our article for an example. You also have the advantage of having one partitioned table.

Data Processed (MB) vs BigQuery Table

Table	Data Processed (MB)
Original (from GA4)	770.42
Processed flat table	214.48
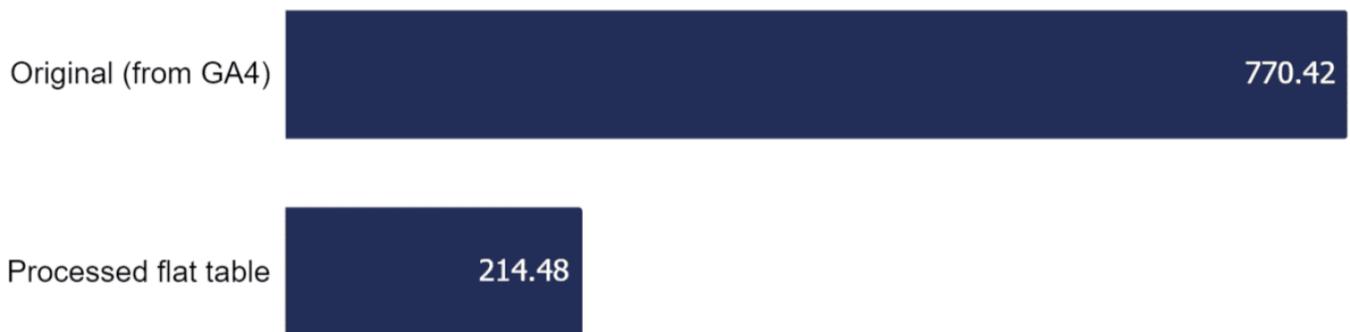
TIP #3

TRACK TECH PERFORMANCE

If you use Google Tag Manager it's fairly straightforward to send custom events and custom data into GA4. The most common tech performance items you'd want to track is actual page load times for your users, non-visible errors (eg. browser Javascript errors) as well as visible errors (eg. 404s, failed form fills). Putting these together into a dashboard, or creating notifications) will be very useful for IT, keeping them informed and in control.

URL	NUMBER OF 404 VIEWS
/contactus	83
/products/9823	66
/contact-us	21
/our-pricing	20

# TIP #4

CAPTURE CLIENT GA4 FOR DATA MERGING

GA4 associates all web activity with a client ID. If you capture this value alongside user forms completed (eg. registration) and send this data to your backend systems, you have the ability to merge together many sources of data. For example, see what web activity preceded certain offline events that are only captured in your backend system (and not in GA4).
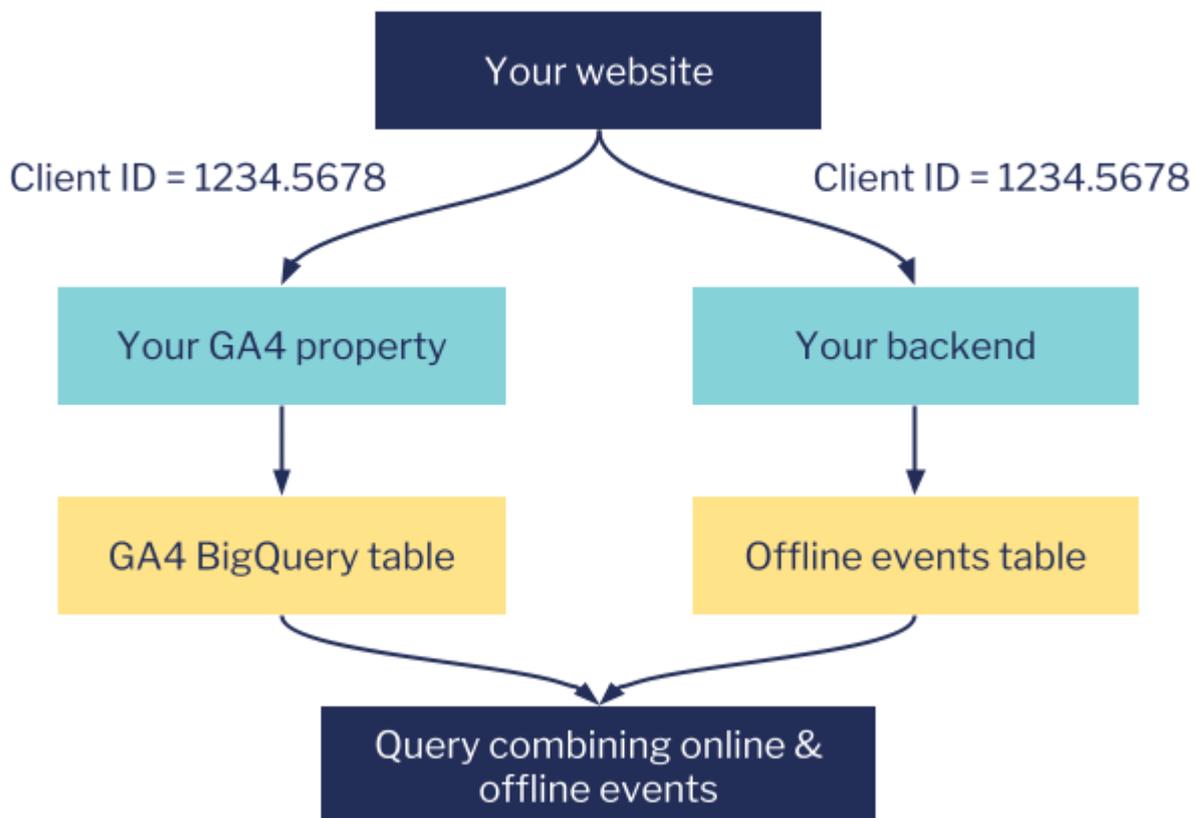
TIP #5

CONSIDER SERVER-SIDE TRACKING

Having server-side tracking gives you a more robust solution compared to client-side JavaScript. With third party cookies and known tracking endpoints are being blocked more and more, there is a growing data gap for tools deployed through client-side. By routing your events through a service like GTM server-side, you will be able to get a more solid foundation for tracking and a more accurate view of your website behaviour.
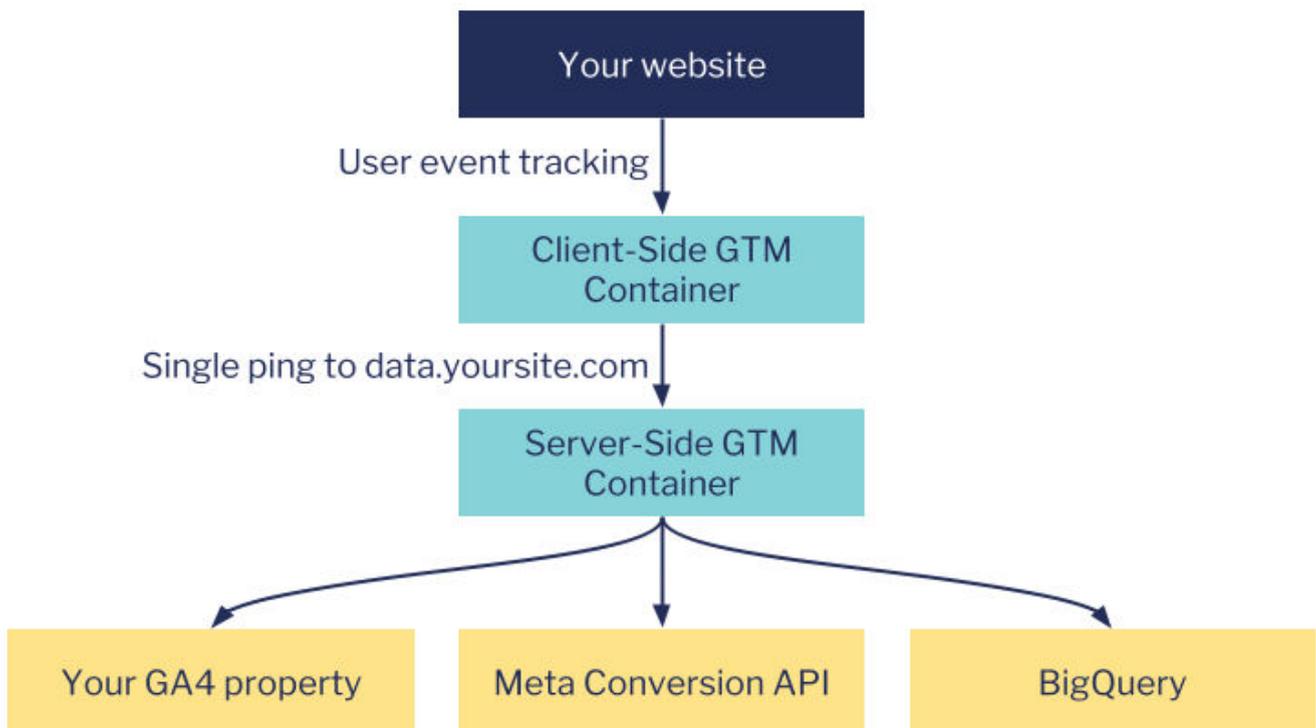
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