

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE · WW-002

Set up Google Analytics 4 and deploy it through Google Tag Manager

Create a correctly configured GA4 property and web data stream, deploy the Google tag through Google Tag Manager, and confirm real visits are recorded.

TRACKING & ANALYTICS

VERSION 1.0	EFFECTIVE 5 October 2026
NEXT REVIEW 5 April 2027	TIME 45 minutes
DIFFICULTY Beginner	RELATED WW-001 · WW-003
AUDIENCE Marketers with GTM publish access and a business Google account	
TOOLS Google Analytics 4 · Google Tag Manager · Tag Assistant	

Purpose

Google Analytics 4 (GA4) is the measurement foundation for every marketing decision the business makes. This procedure creates a GA4 property with sensible defaults (UK time zone and currency, maximum data retention, internal traffic excluded) and deploys it through Google Tag Manager (GTM) so future changes never need a developer. It is finished when GA4 Realtime shows your own test visit and DebugView shows page views from every page template.

Scope

In scope

- Creating the GA4 account, property and web data stream
- Configuring retention, enhanced measurement and internal traffic rules
- Adding the Google tag to GTM and publishing it
- Verifying data in Tag Assistant, DebugView and Realtime

Out of scope

- Installing GTM itself (see WW-001)
- Lead or purchase tracking (see WW-003)
- Consent banners, Consent Mode and cookie policy wording
- Migrating historical data from other analytics tools

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Implementer	Creates the property, configures GTM and runs verification.
Business owner	Owns the GA4 account and approves who has access.
Reviewer	Confirms the quality checks and that data is arriving.

Prerequisites

- GTM installed on every page and verified (WW-001), with publish permission on the container.
- A business-owned Google account with permission to create GA4 properties.
- The business's legal name, website URL, reporting time zone and currency.
- The office's public IP address (search "what is my IP" from the office network) if internal traffic should be excluded.

Procedure

Create the property and data stream

Set GA4 up with the right regional settings from the start, because the time zone affects every report.

1. Sign in to analytics.google.com with the business account, open **Admin** and click **Create**, then **Account**. Name the account after the business.
2. Create a property named after the website, set the **Reporting time zone** to **United Kingdom** (or the business's local zone) and the **Currency** to **British Pound (£)**.
3. Complete the business details, choose **Web** as the platform, enter the website URL and a stream name such as **Website**, then click **Create stream**.
4. Copy the **Measurement ID** (it starts with **G-**) into the work ticket.

Configure the property

Change the defaults that limit reporting or pollute data.

1. On the web stream page, open **Enhanced measurement** and confirm page views, scrolls, outbound clicks, site search, video engagement and file downloads are enabled. Turn **Form interactions** off; it is unreliable and lead tracking is handled in WW-003.
2. In **Admin**, open **Data collection and modification**, then **Data retention**, and set event data retention to the longest option available (**14 months** on standard properties). Click **Save**.
3. If the business has an office network, open the web stream, then **Configure tag settings**, **Show more**, **Define internal traffic**, and create a rule named **Office** with the office IP address.
4. In **Admin**, open **Data filters**, find the **Internal Traffic** filter and change its state from **Testing** to **Active**.

[!WARNING] An active filter permanently excludes matching traffic. Confirm the IP address is correct before you activate it, and never add a home broadband address that customers might share.

Add the Google tag in GTM

Deploy GA4 through GTM so the website code never needs to change for analytics.

1. In GTM, open **Variables**, create a **Constant** variable named **GA4 Measurement ID** and set its value to the **G-** ID.
2. Open **Tags**, click **New**, choose **Google Tag**, and enter **{{GA4 Measurement ID}}** as the **Tag ID**.
3. Set the trigger to **Initialization - All Pages** and name the tag **GA4 - Google tag**. Save it.

[!TIP] Using a variable for the Measurement ID means every future GA4 event tag can reference it, and a property change only needs one edit.

Verify and publish

Prove data arrives before you publish to visitors.

1. Click **Preview**, connect to the website, and confirm `GA4 · Google tag` fires on the **Initialization** event on the home page.
2. In GA4, open **Admin**, then **DebugView**, and confirm your device appears with `page_view` events as you browse one page of each template.
3. Back in GTM, click **Submit**, name the version `GA4 Google tag`, and click **Publish**.
4. Visit the site in a normal (not preview) window and confirm your visit appears in GA4 **Reports**, **Realtime** within a few minutes.

Set up access

Make sure the business keeps control and the team has what it needs.

1. In **Admin**, open **Account access management** and confirm the business account has the **Administrator** role.
2. Add each team member or agency with the lowest role that lets them do their job (usually **Analyst** or **Editor**), and record who has access.

Quality checks

- ☐ Reporting time zone and currency match the business.
- ☐ Event data retention is set to the maximum.
- ☐ Exactly one `G-` Measurement ID fires on every template; no hard-coded GA4 tag remains.
- ☐ DebugView showed `page_view` events from each template during testing.
- ☐ Realtime showed a live visit after publishing.
- ☐ The internal traffic filter is active only if a confirmed office IP was added.

Troubleshooting

Symptom	Likely cause	Fix
DebugView shows no devices	Preview mode not connected, or an ad blocker is active	Reconnect Preview in a clean browser profile without extensions.
Page views are doubled	A hard-coded <code>gtag.js</code> snippet or a CMS integration also sends data	Remove the duplicate installation and keep GTM only.
Realtime is empty after publishing	Version not published, or website cache serving old pages	Check the live version in GTM and purge the website cache.
Your own visits still appear	Internal traffic filter still in Testing, or the IP changed	Activate the filter or update the IP rule.

Records

- Record the GA4 account ID, property ID, Measurement ID and data retention setting in the client record.
- Log who was granted access and at what role.
- Note the GTM version number that introduced GA4.

References

- [Set up Analytics for a website \(Google Analytics Help\)](#)
- [Set up the Google tag with Google Tag Manager \(Google Tag Manager Help\)](#)
- [Data retention \(Google Analytics Help\)](#)
- [Filter out internal traffic \(Google Analytics Help\)](#)
- [Monitor events in DebugView \(Google Analytics Help\)](#)

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