Slice & Dice your repository usage: Google Analytics for DSpace workshop

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Abstract

Google Analytics is the most popular free solution for analysing web usage. It is widely used within the DSpace community. However, because of the rapid evolution of this platform, its full potential remains largely unknown for many repository managers.

Format

The ideal format would be a one hour session with around 20-50 attendees in a room where they can work on their own laptops. However, the content can be tuned to fit any format.

Proposed contents

1. Introduction

Assuming that most participants will have at least vaguely heard or used Google Analytics, the introduction will only briefly cover what Google Analytics is and how it can be installed in DSpace. Participants will be shown how they can grant other people with access rights to their Google Analytics data.

2. Standard Reports

Google Analytics comes with a large number of pre-defined reports. Because most of these reports are tailored at regular websites and e-commerce it is not easy to find the most relevant reports for a repository manager. It will be explained how you can setup email alerts to receive reports automatically.

This part concludes with the most important limitations in standard reports which can be addressed by ... custom reports

3. Custom Reports

A number of custom reports will be shown that can be of specific use of repository managers. We will create a custom filter that only shows academic usage of your repository.

4. Campaign parameters

Campaign, source and medium parameters can be added to URLs you use as a repository manager to promote the repository, or specific items on special occasions. In this part we will highlight how the use of such parameters can help you to segment your repository

traffic and help you to identify those events that were really effective in driving repository usage.

5. The Google Analytics API

Very likely, the workshop will be too short to address the full potential of the Google Analytics API. We will restrict this part to a concrete example of how an institution has integrated google analytics graphs and statistics directly on repository pages.

6. Limitations

While Google Analytics is a very versatile tool, it has important limitations. You are not able to get a full export of all the data google stores about your repository usage and users. Because the system relies on the execution of javascript for the tracking, GA can not keep track of your repository downloads, at least not without customization.
And maybe most important of all: GA treats your repository just like any other website and is unable to aggregate your traffic across collections and communities.