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GA4 Shopify Slack Weekly Lesson

Compare UA to GA4 Conversions

Overview

One of the most common questions we receive regarding Universal Analytics transition to GA4 is around conversion attribution accuracy.

“Why don’t GA4 conversions match Universal Analytics?”

This lesson will show how you can compare UA to GA4 and quick configuration tips.

Options to Compare Conversions by Source/Medium

1. Manual comparison by exporting data from UA and GA4
2. Use Data Studio template that blends reports
3. Use your own data warehouse or third party analysis tool

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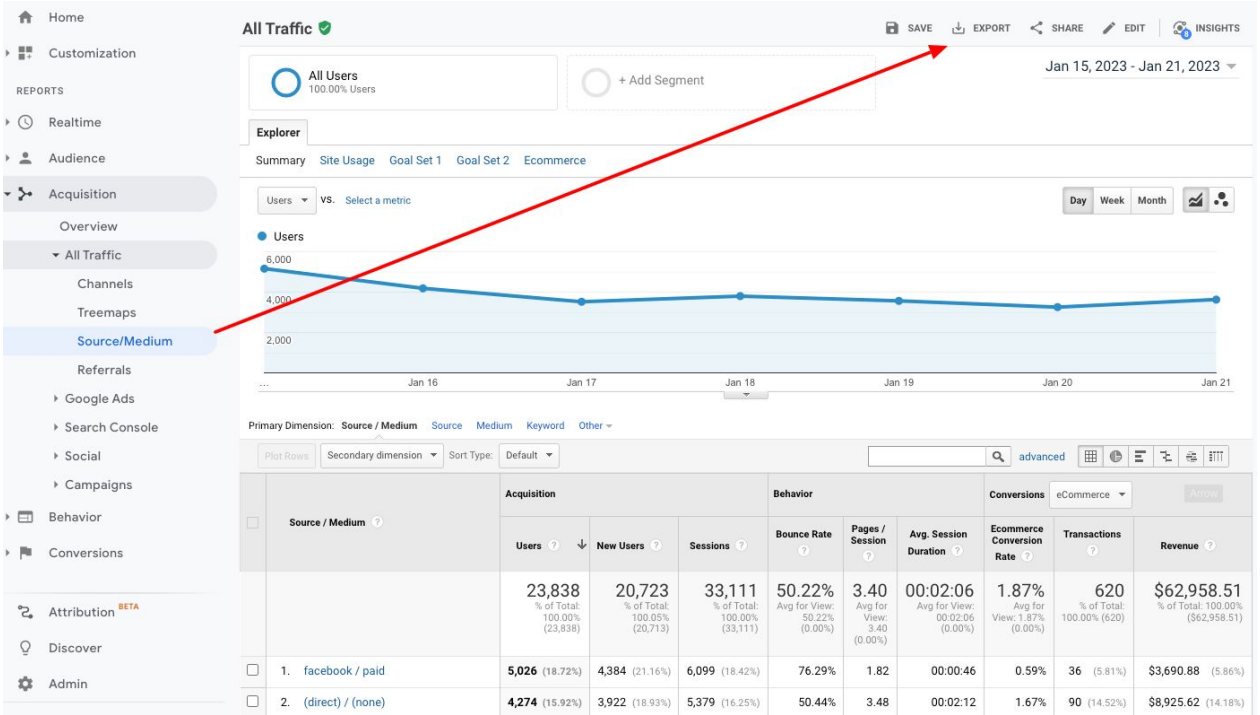
Manual Comparison

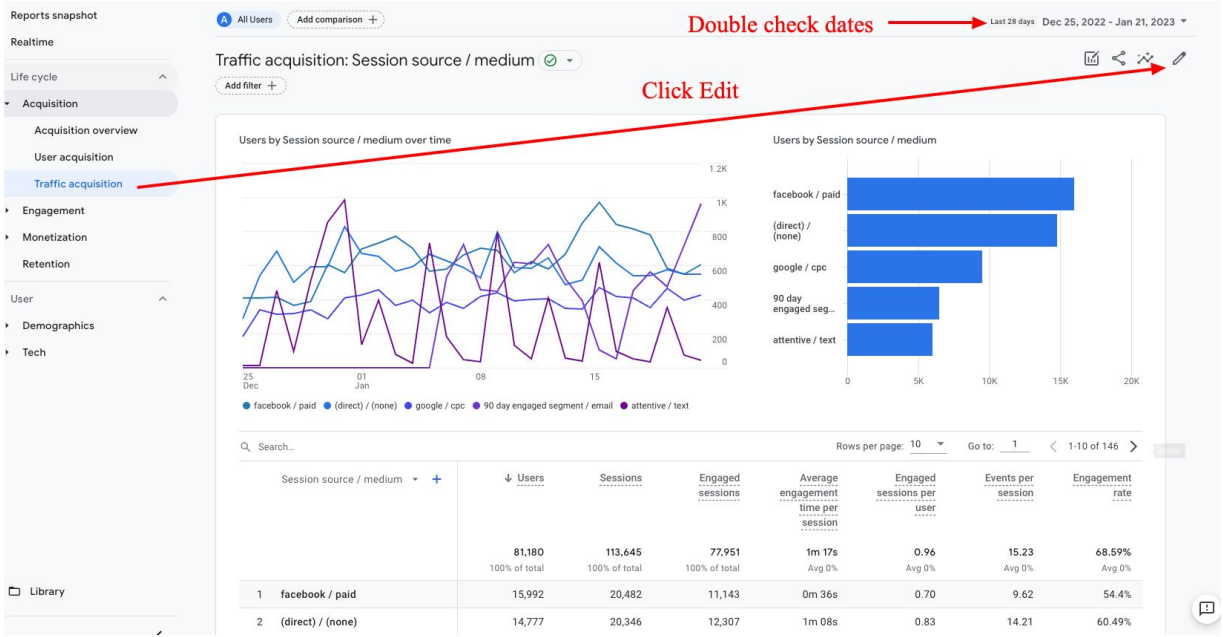
UA: Go to Source/Medium (or Channel) Report

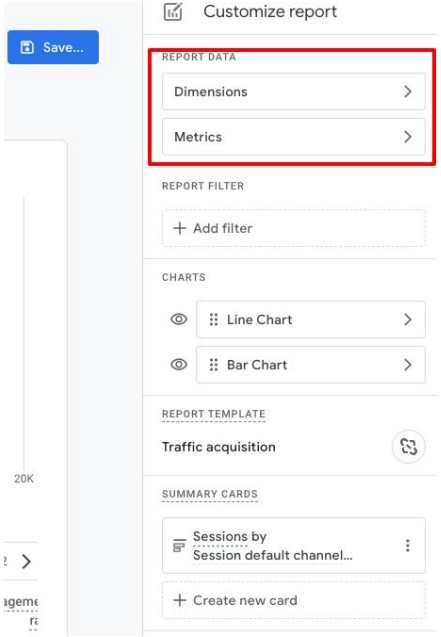
From here select your date range and export in top right.



GA4: Go to Traffic Acquisition Report

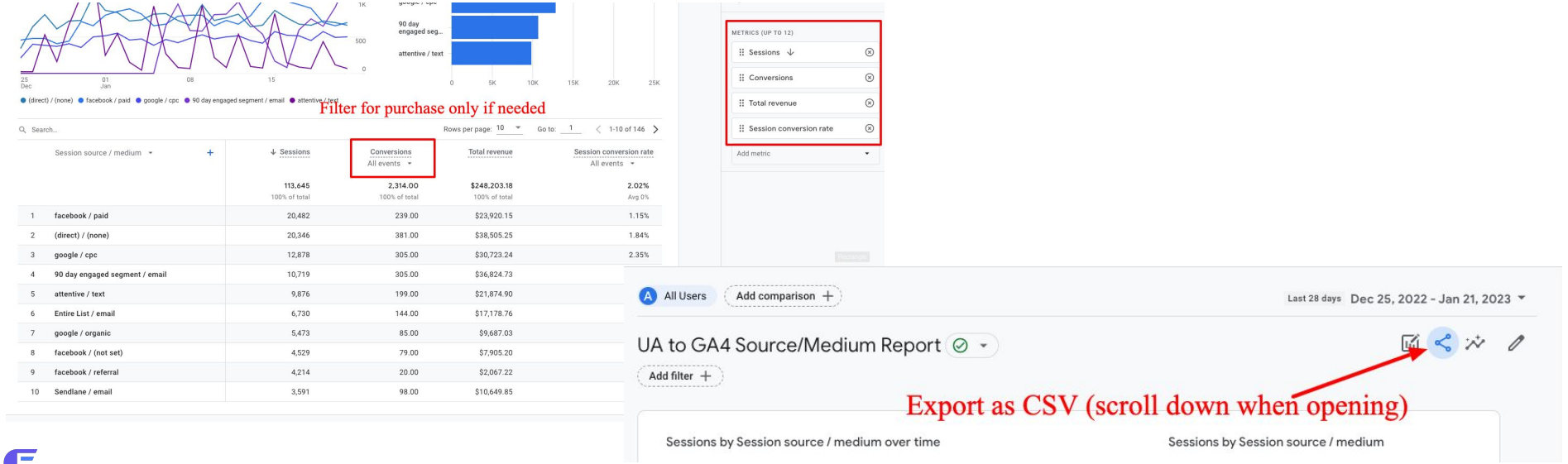
From here select your date range and edit in top right. You'll then be able to customize.





GA4: Go to Traffic Acquisition Report (continued)

Configure dimensions and metrics to match the example below (or customize to your own needs). Then Save as a new report. Once saved, export as shown in image on right.



	Session source / medium	Sessions	Conversions (All events)	Total revenue	Session conversion rate (All events)
		113,645 (100% of total)	2,314.00 (100% of total)	$248,203.18 (100% of total)	2.02% (Avg 0%)
1	facebook / paid	20,482	239.00	$23,920.15	1.15%
2	(direct) / (none)	20,346	381.00	$38,505.25	1.84%
3	google / cpc	12,878	305.00	$30,723.24	2.35%
4	90 day engaged segment / email	10,719	305.00	$36,824.73	
5	attentive / text	9,876	199.00	$21,874.90	
6	Entire List / email	6,730	144.00	$17,178.76	
7	google / organic	5,473	85.00	$9,687.03	
8	facebook / (not set)	4,529	79.00	$7,905.20	
9	facebook / referral	4,214	20.00	$2,067.22	
10	Sendlane / email	3,591	98.00	$10,649.85	

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Data Studio Comparison

Data Studio Comparison

Here's a snapshot of a blended row report that keys off of source/medium. You can see UA and GA4 order information within each row. But beware of data discrepancies like referral exclusions and casing of source/medium that distorts data (ex. Missing large # of orders in GA4).

- See the Quick Fixes section to learn how to fix.
- Wondering why GA4 has fractional order #s? Data Driven Attribution Model (future lesson!).

	Source	Medium	UA Orders	GA4 Orders	Order Diff	UA Conv. Rate	GA4 Conv. Rate
2.	90 day engaged segment	email	303	147.64	155.36	2.94%	2.33%
3.	google	cpc	281	162.16	118.84	2.06%	2.44%
4.	attentive	text	233	100.26	132.74	2.43%	2.49%
5.	entire list	email	145	null	null	2.35%	null
6.	google	organic	125	77.08	47.92	1.9%	2.15%
7.	[redacted] - opened	email	125	null	null	4.03%	null
8.	m.facebook.com	referral	124	18.93	105.07	3.16%	5.92%
9.	facebook	paid	114	122	-8	0.52%	2.18%
10.	sendlane	email	110	null	null	2.56%	null
11.	facebook	(not set)	92	31.15	60.85	1.05%	2.7%
12.	linktr.ee	referral	89	72.47	16.53	2.58%	1.23%

Data Studio Comparison

You can connect your UA and GA4 properties to enable a quick comparison to find gaps. The report template we created has two separate pages:

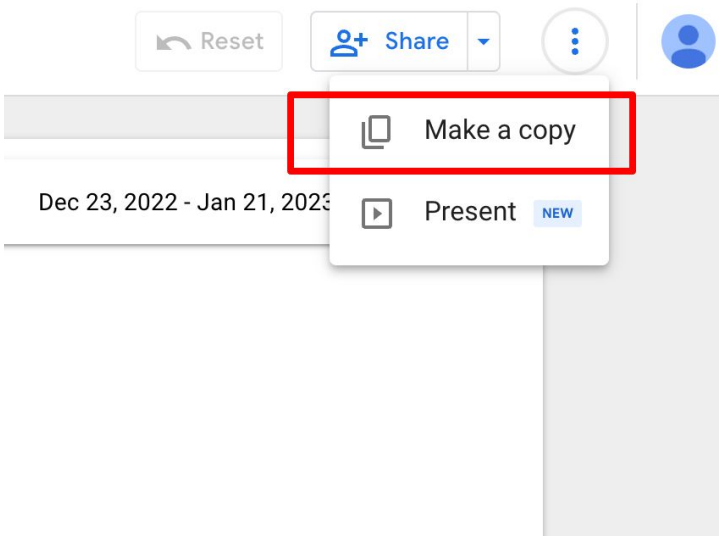
1. One page showing source/medium order information that blends UA and GA4 data by source/medium
2. A 2nd page showing source/medium order information for UA and GA4, respectively

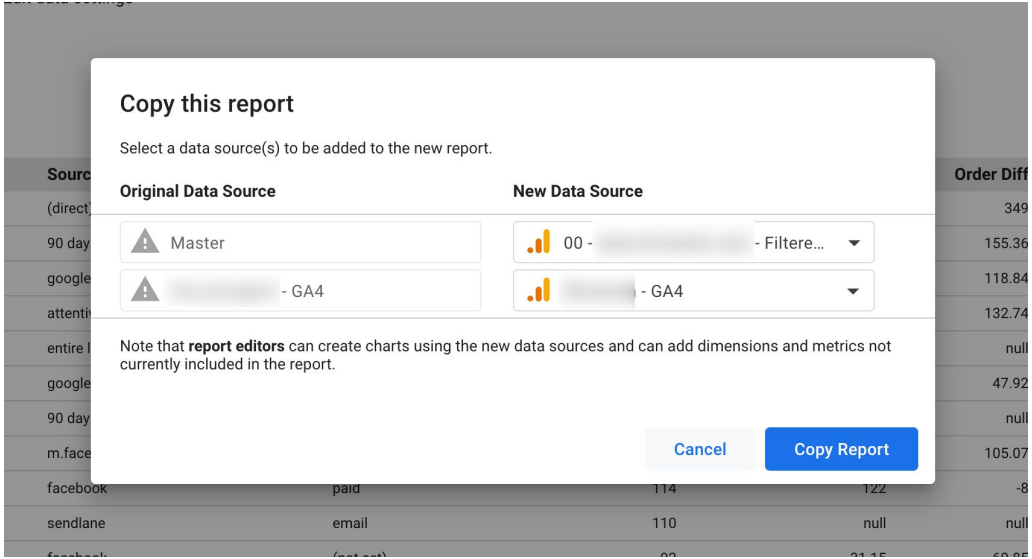
A few notes to consider:

- Session conversion rate exists in GA4 UI, but **does not exist in data studio**. You need to create a custom calculated field (which you'll see how to create in future slide)
- If you have multiple events marked as conversion (ex. Purchase and add to carts) then add a filter on the report where **event name** contains **purchase** (already included on the template)
- There are known issues in GA4 data studio connector API so you might see weird results (ex. low sessions)

Make Copy of Data Studio Report

[Click here to view and make a copy](). You'll then be prompted to connect your data sources (image on right). For the first report select your Universal Analytics view. Then select GA4 for 2nd source.

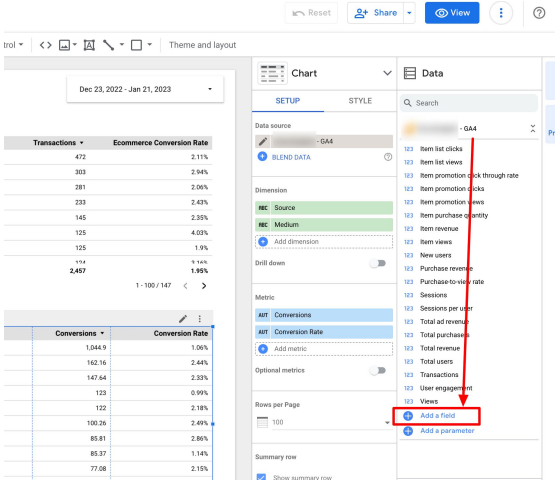


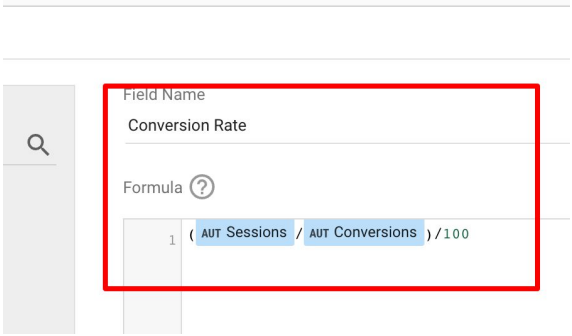


(Optional) Add Custom Fields

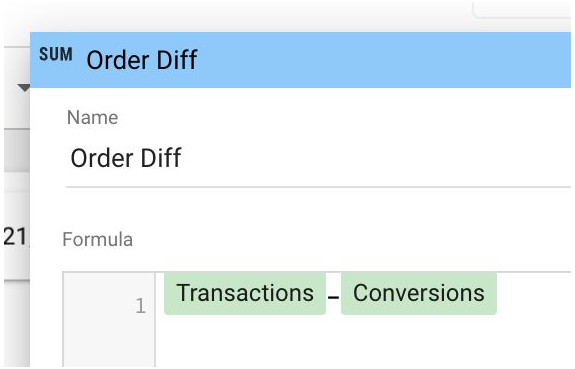
In order to add GA4 Conversion Rate you need to Add a Field to the GA4 Data Source and create a custom metric formula. If you'd like to add an Order Diff column like the comparison example, create another custom metric as shown below.

GA4 Conversion Rate





Order Difference Formula



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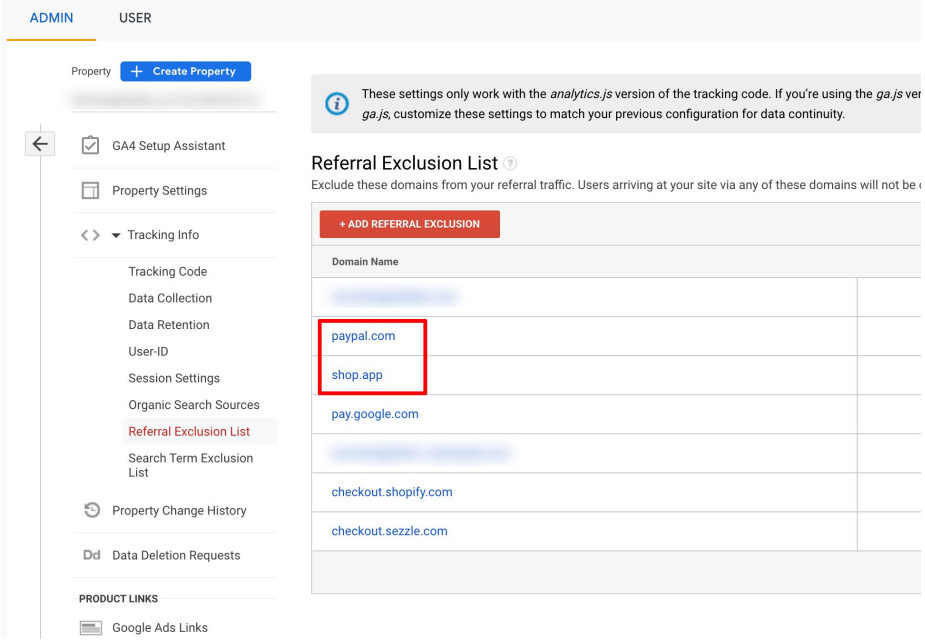
Quick Data Fixes

1. Referral Exclusions
2. Custom Filters

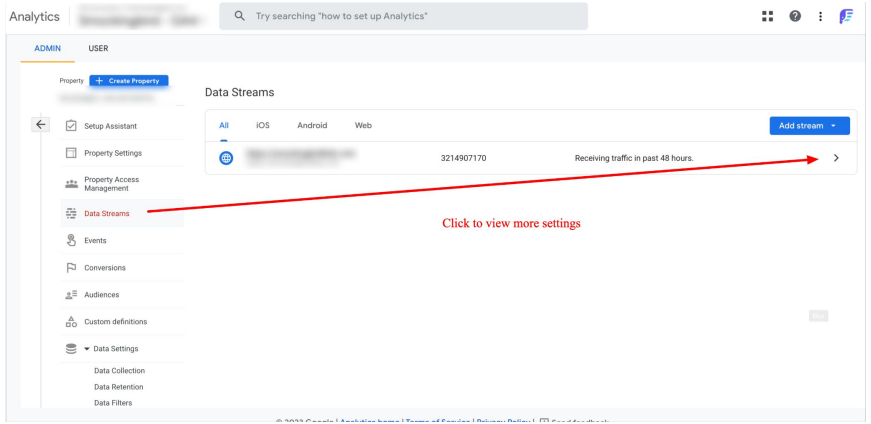
Referral Exclusions - Universal Analytics

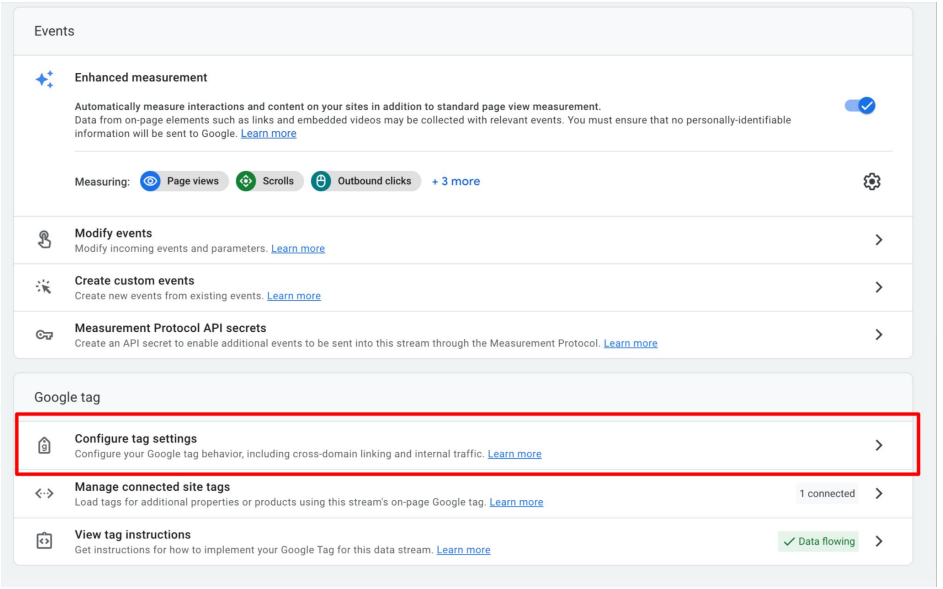
Chances are you have referral exclusions set up in UA. These ensure your attribution (ex. UTM source/medium) for transactions remain accurate and aren't "stolen" by payment URLs.



Referral Exclusions - GA4

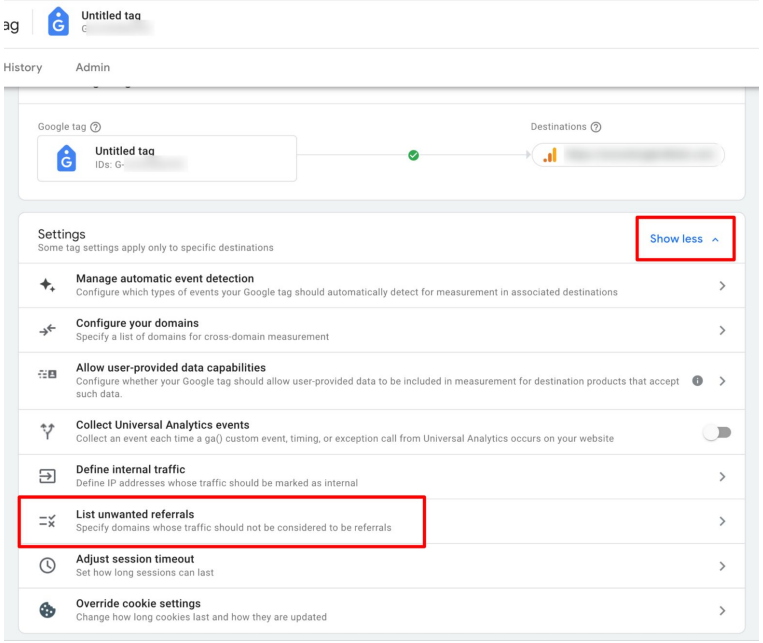
You should set these up in GA4 as well. Go to Property Settings > Data Streams > Configure Tag Settings.

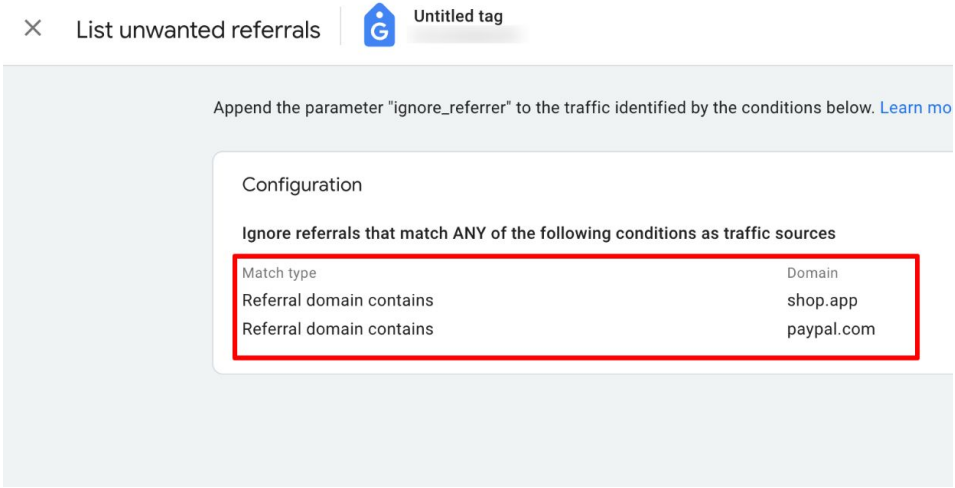




Referral Exclusions - GA4 (continued)

Then go to List Unwanted Referrals > Add Your Referral Exclusion Configurations

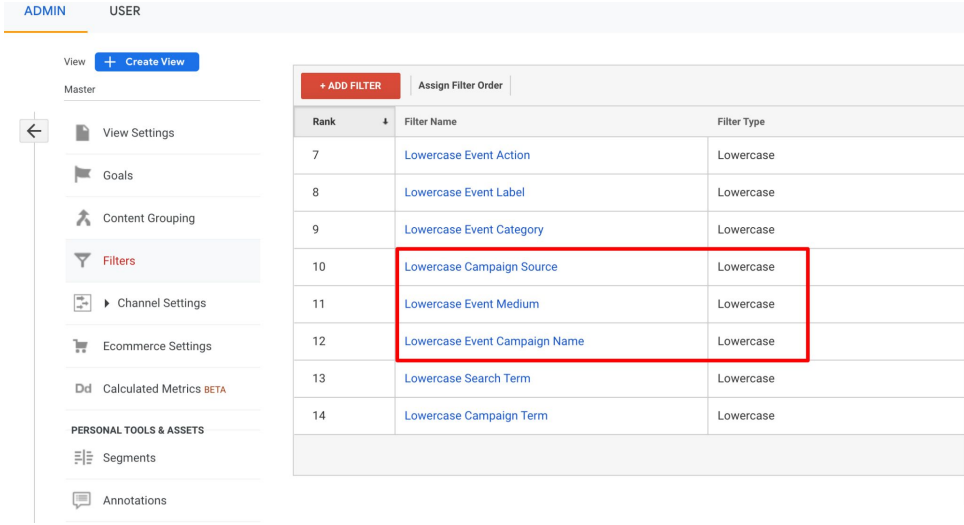




Lowercase Filters

You may be using lowercase or other custom filters in Universal Analytics that modifies your custom UTM parameters and/or traffic source data. Unfortunately you currently don't have the ability to add these same types of filters to GA4. So when comparing UA to GA4 your filter options boil down to:

1. Remove these custom filters in UA
2. Implement these filter overrides during data collection (ex. in GTM)
3. Keep casing consistent in UTM tagging (ex. Lowercase, no special characters). Otherwise UA may show lowercase while GA4 is upper-case which means they won't blend into same row on report



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Closing

Summary

If you have your own data warehouse, an in-house analyst, or have a tool like Daasity then chances are they can help manage this comparison for you.

It's important to note that it's unlikely that UA is going to match GA4 100%. There are so many differences in how data is processed, reported, and visualized in GA4. Not to mention attribution reporting settings are different.

At the minimum be sure:

- Both are collected data the same way (client-side or server-side)
- Data collection settings – like referral exclusion and filters – are similar
- You thoroughly review your GA4 property settings and data to ensure no major gaps exist