hanapin
marketing

5 Ways to Use Google Analytics for CRO That You Haven't Thought Of
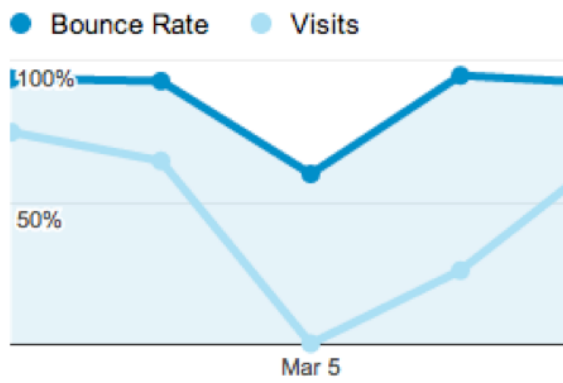
Why Google Analytics?

You've got great ads and a great click through rate, but you're just not seeing the conversions you want. At this point, you might want to take a look at your site and come up with some conversion rate optimization (CRO) ideas. There are a variety of great tools out there, but there are also some free options to get you started. Google Analytics is a free tool and it is often overlooked in initial CRO assessments.

ANALYTICS CAN BE USEFUL FOR CRO TESTING IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

1) Deciding which pages should be tested first
2) Give you basic ideas on what to test
3) Help you track your results

1.) BOUNCE RATE & EXIT RATE

Bounce Rate (percentage of single page visits) and Exit Rate are good metrics to measure where users are leaving your site prematurely. If one or both of these metrics are high for a particular page, you should be thinking about what is causing people to leave immediately. It could be that users either aren't finding what they want, or your page isn't very conversion-friendly.

Keep in mind if your traffic dips it can skew your bounce rate.

1.) BOUNCE RATE & EXIT RATE CONT...

How This Is Useful For CRO

Once you identify a landing page that has a high bounce rate, consider if it's a relevant landing page. If you think the content is relevant, then take a look at the actual layout of the page. It could be that your call-to-action isn't attention-grabbing or your page is cluttered with too much information.

2.) GOAL FUNNELS

Let's face it, cart abandonment happens (and happens a lot!). Although we can't stop it completely, we can take steps to prevent it.

If you have goal funnels set up in your account, the Goal Flow report and Funnel Visualization report give you some insight into where people are exiting the conversion process.
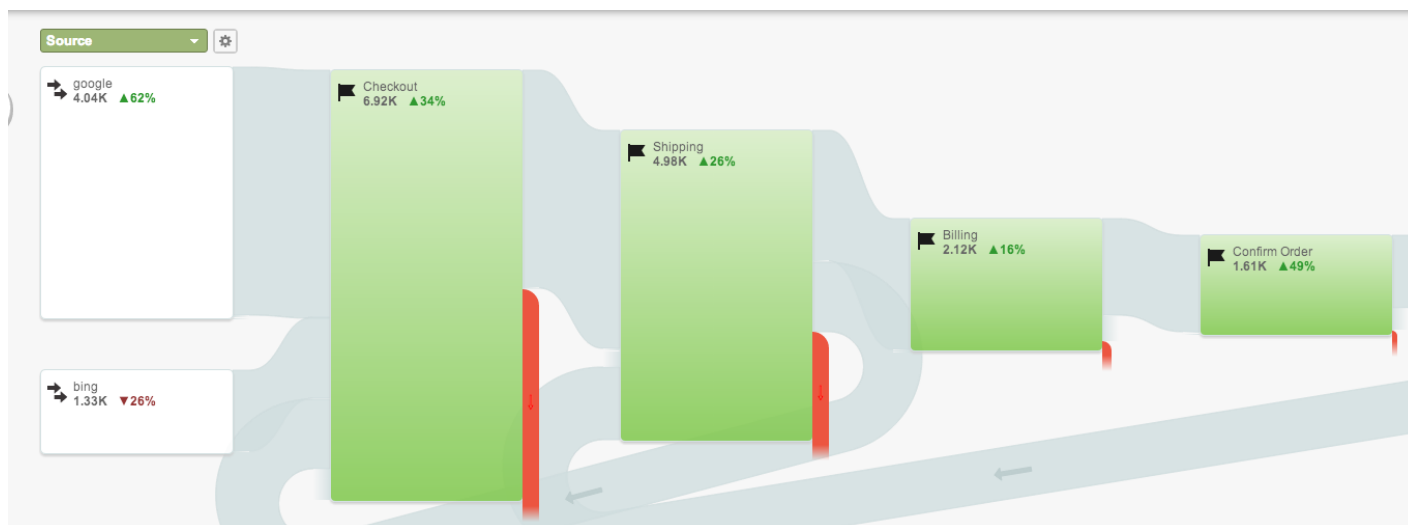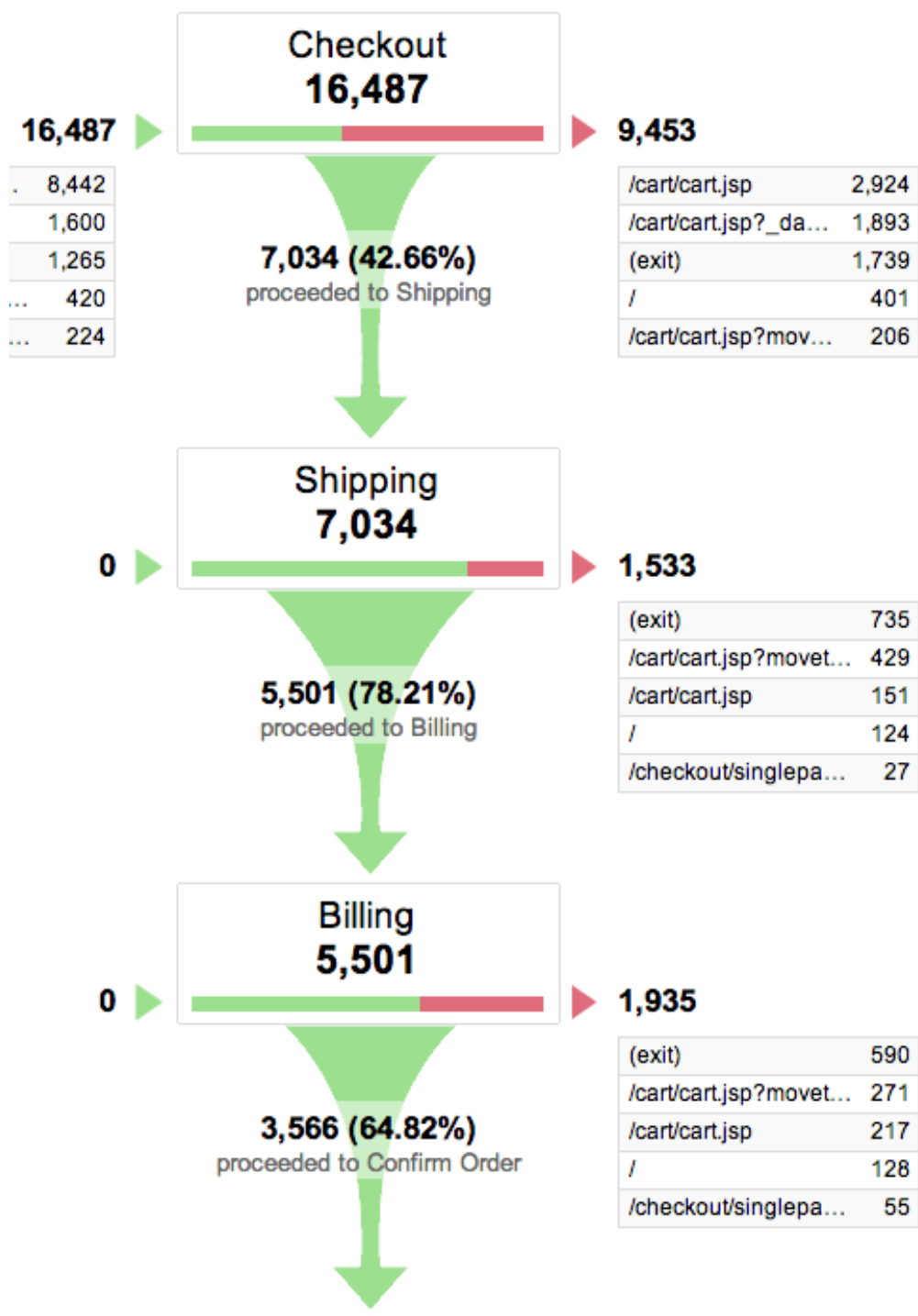

Here we see that about 50% of people exit the funnel at the checkout page, and 34% exit at the shipping page.

The Funnel Visualization report gives you similar information for each step in the Goal Funnel that you have set up.

2.) GOAL FUNNELS CONT...

	Checkout 16,487	
16,487 ▶		▶ 9,453

.	8,442
	1,600
	1,265
...	420
...	224

/cart/cart.jsp	2,924
/cart/cart.jsp?_da...	1,893
(exit)	1,739
/	401
/cart/cart.jsp?mov...	206

7,034 (42.66%)
proceeded to Shipping

	Shipping 7,034	
0 ▶		▶ 1,533

(exit)	735
/cart/cart.jsp?movet...	429
/cart/cart.jsp	151
/	124
/checkout/singlepa...	27

5,501 (78.21%)
proceeded to Billing

	Billing 5,501	
0 ▶		▶ 1,935

(exit)	590
/cart/cart.jsp?movet...	271
/cart/cart.jsp	217
/	128
/checkout/singlepa...	55

3,566 (64.82%)
proceeded to Confirm Order

Here we see that only 42% of people are continuing to the Shipping step of the checkout process. Most people are going back to their cart, and a decent amount are exiting completely.

2.) GOAL FUNNELS CONT...

How This Is Useful For CRO

This is a good indicator to reevaluate your checkout pages. Are you giving your shoppers an easy way to back out of a purchase? Are your forms confusing? If you can open these pages with In-Page Analytics there could also be some valuable insight into whether users are straying away from the checkout process as a normal part of the buying cycle or if your checkout process itself is driving them away. In-Page Analytics is also useful in deciding what kind of test to set up.

3.) SITE SEARCH

Site search allows you to view what people are typing into your site's search box, how many conversions happened during visits with and without searches, and what page users were searching on. The Site Search reports are located under the Behavior tab on the left hand side, like the image to the right:

If you want to see what pages people are searching specific terms on, simply go to Search Terms and add Start Page as a secondary dimension.
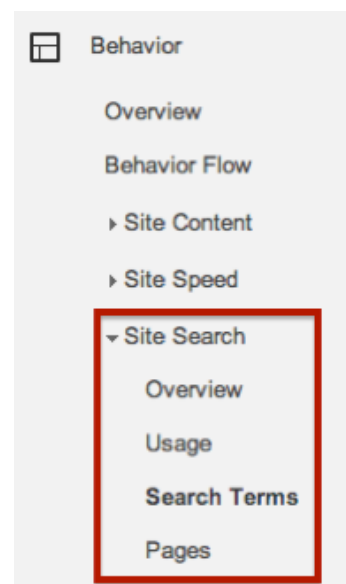
Search Term	Start Page	Total Unique Searches	Results Pageviews / Search	% Search Exits	% Search Refinements	Time after Search	Average Search Depth
		1,910 % of Total: 100.00% (1,910)	1.47 Site Avg: 1.47 (0.00%)	18.59% Site Avg: 18.59% (0.00%)	14.54% Site Avg: 14.54% (0.00%)	00:04:29 Site Avg: 00:04:29 (0.00%)	2.47 Site Avg: 2.47 (0.00%)
1. remarketing	(entrance)	27 (1.41%)	1.00	0.00%	3.70%	00:01:16	3.48
2. remarketing	/	16 (0.84%)	1.31	12.50%	4.76%	00:04:38	2.50
3. youtube	(entrance)	14 (0.73%)	1.00	7.14%	14.29%	00:01:32	3.64

How This Is Useful For CRO

For starters, if Visits With Site Search result in a lot of conversions, users may not be landing on the pages that they are looking for to begin with. If this is the case, take a look at what exactly people are searching for on that landing page.

Site Search reports give you a general idea of what people are looking for on your site (and if they're actually finding it). If your site has a lot of searches, you could test your site navigation layout or streamlining your pages to make them simpler.
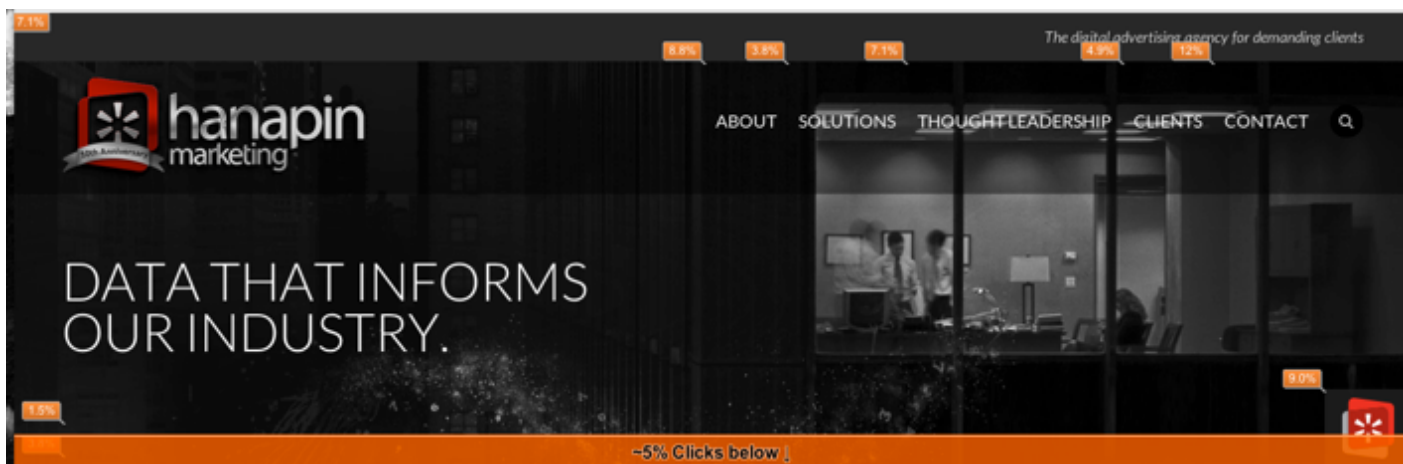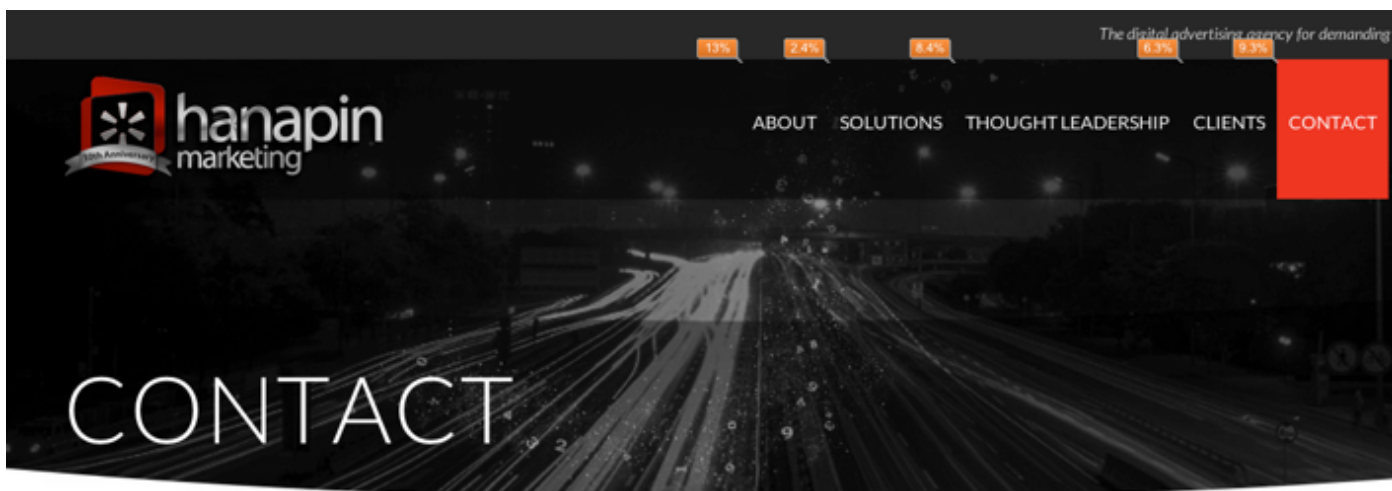
4.) IN-PAGE ANALYTICS

In-Page Analytics allows you to view your page with an overlay of click statistics.

Here is Hanapin's homepage as an example:

Here we notice that 12% of people are clicking on the Contact button, and not many are scrolling down/clicking on the bottom portion of the page.

Next, I click on the contact page to see where our (hopefully) potential clients are clicking next.

Right off the bat, I see that the majority are visiting the home and about pages.

Scrolling down, 9% are submitting their information.
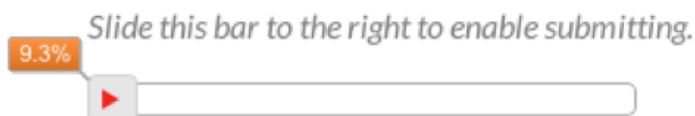
4.) IN-PAGE ANALYTICS CONT...

How This Is Useful For CRO

If you find that a lot of people are clicking where you don't want them to, you might test some changes to the layout and/or content on that page. If your goal is to generate leads, your lead form may be too long or complicated. It's also important to keep in mind other methods of conversion. In many cases, people could be converting via sending an email or calling a phone number. Make sure you check out these metrics when you're designing your CRO tests.

5.) TRACKING YOUR RESULTS

The Goal Flow report is also useful in tracking results when you compare two date ranges (ideally comparing the duration your test ran with the previous time period).
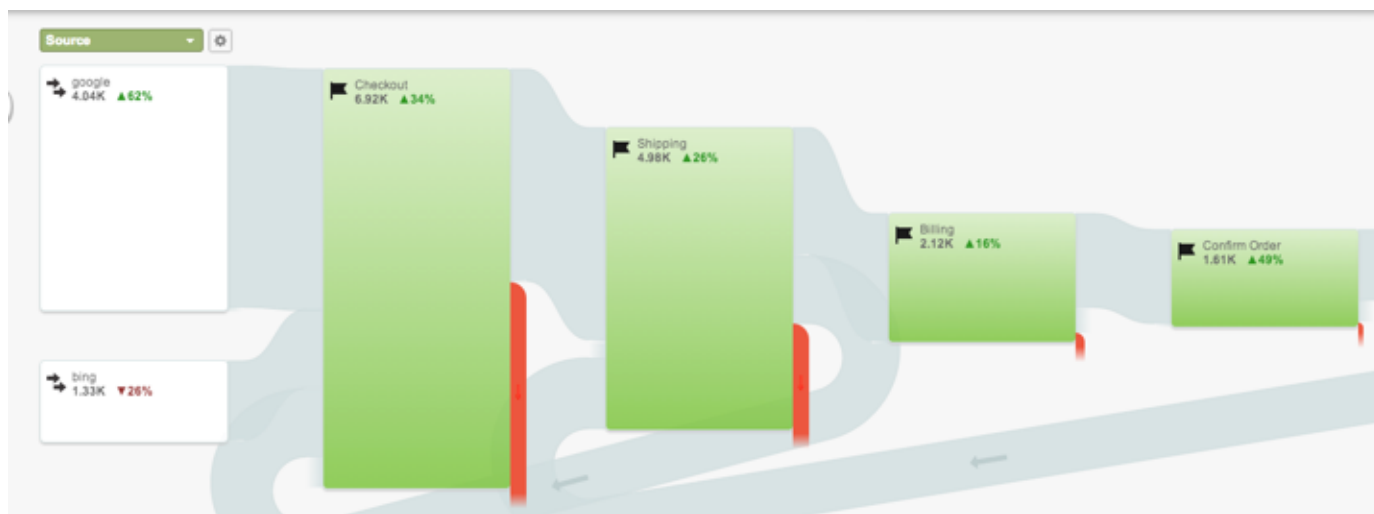
| Sessions by Source			Step 1 Checkout		Step 2 Shipping		Step 3 Billing		Step 4 Confirm Order	
google										
	5/1/14 - 5/22/14	4.04K sessions	3.99K	98% of 4.04K	1.69K	41% of 4.04K	1.25K	31% of 4.04K	1.1K	27% of 4.04K
	4/9/14 - 4/30/14	2.48K sessions	2.45K	98% of 2.48K	1.05K	42% of 2.48K	816	32% of 2.48K	459	18% of 2.48K
bing										
	5/1/14 - 5/22/14	1.33K sessions	1.3K	98% of 1.33K	664	50% of 1.33K	460	34% of 1.33K	306	23% of 1.33K
	4/9/14 - 4/30/14	1.81K sessions	1.81K	100% of 1.81K	817	45% of 1.81K	664	36% of 1.81K	511	28% of 1.81K

This report makes it pretty easy to see the lift in each conversion step.

5.) TRACKING YOUR RESULTS

The Behavior Flow Report is also a nice visual to see how traffic patterns change as a result of your testing.
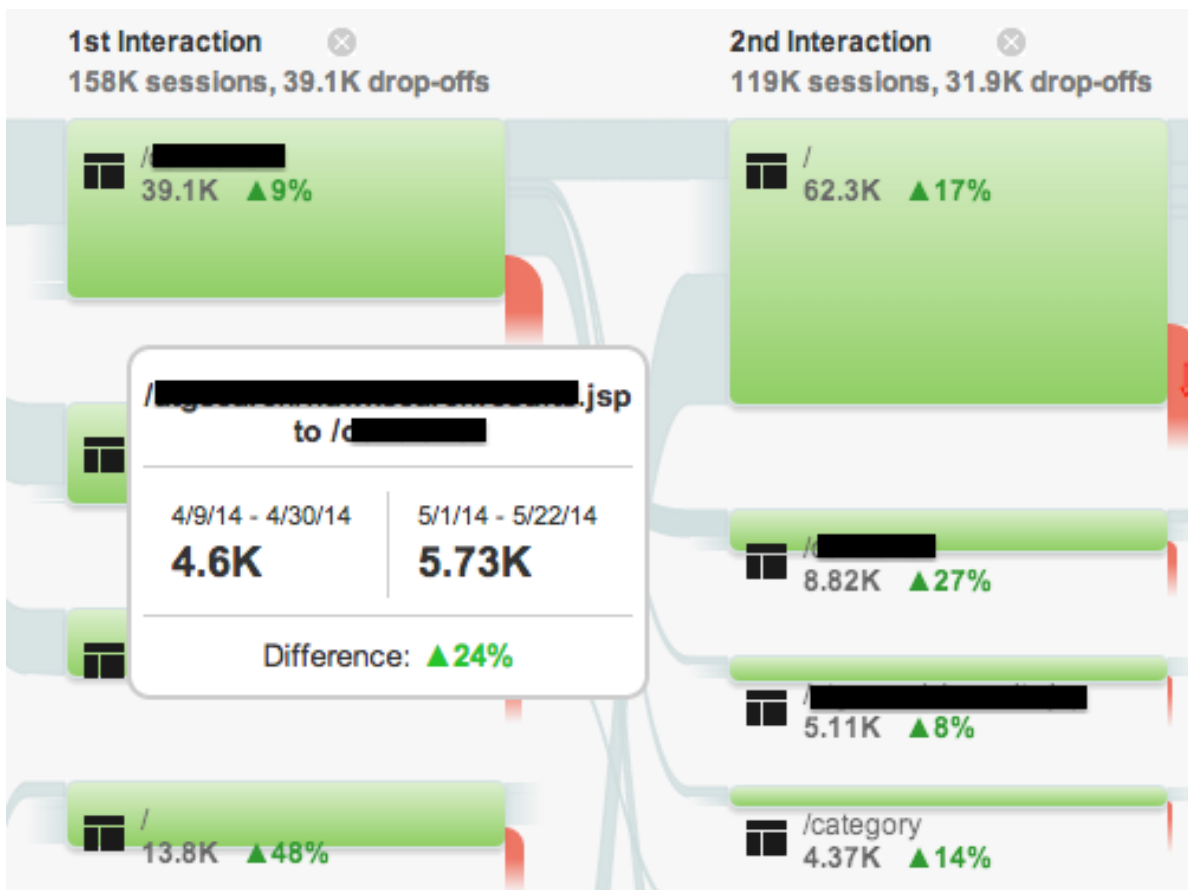
In this particular account there was a 24% increase in traffic flow from one page to another. The pages you'll want to pay attention to, depends on the particular account. For example, if you have an ecommerce account, you'll want to see traffic flow from a product page you're testing to the cart page vs. other products.

5.) TRACKING YOUR RESULTS CONT...

Likewise, opening up the Site Search reports and comparing two date ranges also provides insight:

Site Search Status	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions eCommerce ▼	
	Sessions ↓	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Transactions	Revenue
Paid Search Traffic	32.33% ▲ 292,078 vs 220,724	2.08% ▼ 61.72% vs 63.03%	29.58% ▲ 180,256 vs 139,112	3.27% ▼ 24.62% vs 23.84%	5.39% ▼ 7.74 vs 8.18	9.00% ▲ 00:05:39 vs 00:05:11	34.82% ▲ 2,176 vs 1,614	20.81% ▲ $141,507.79 vs $117,128.55
1. Visits Without Site Search								
May 1, 2014 - May 22, 2014	291,925 (99.95%)	61.71%	180,133 (99.93%)	24.63%	7.74	00:05:39	2,176 (100.00%)	$141,507.79 (100.00%)
Apr 9, 2014 - Apr 30, 2014	220,254 (99.79%)	63.03%	138,826 (99.79%)	23.83%	8.18	00:05:11	1,604 (99.38%)	$116,873.33 (99.78%)
% Change	32.54%	-2.10%	29.75%	3.35%	-5.42%	8.97%	35.66%	21.08%
2. Visits With Site Search								
May 1, 2014 - May 22, 2014	153 (0.05%)	80.39%	123 (0.07%)	13.07%	4.48	00:01:53	0 (0.00%)	$0.00 (0.00%)
Apr 9, 2014 - Apr 30, 2014	470 (0.21%)	60.85%	286 (0.21%)	30.43%	6.33	00:03:42	10 (0.62%)	$255.22 (0.22%)
% Change	-67.45%	32.11%	-56.99%	-57.04%	-29.22%	-49.14%	-100.00%	-100.00%

Again, Site Search may not be relevant to the CRO test you're running. If you tested a different navigation system or a cleaner layout, it's possible you could see visits with site search decrease, as seen here.

How This Is Useful For CRO

As with any testing, tracking results are crucial. Use these tools in Analytics to track how your performance changes with the test you implemented, by comparing metrics over date ranges.

BONUS TIP!

Dashboard

If you're going to be using Analytics as a tool for CRO testing, it may be worth your time to set up a custom dashboard with the metrics and pages you'll be testing. When adding widgets to your dashboard, you can include a filter so only data for the pages you are testing will be displayed.

BONUS TIP! CONT...

Dashboard

Once you add all of the relevant widgets, whenever you want to check on your CRO test, you can simply open up your dashboard.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

While these features in Google Analytics aren't going to give you specific recommendations, it's a great place to start in your initial CRO assessments and planning. If you're having a hard time convincing a client that they need to do CRO, statistics and screenshots like the ones above can strengthen your argument.

Once you implement a CRO test, Analytics can easily be used to track performance. Just keep an eye on the above metrics and reports to compare performance before and after your test. These tools provide a great way to measure the impact CRO has on how users interact with your site as a whole, as some other CRO testing tools don't allow for that.

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