Introduction
Custom dashboards and custom reports help you simplify the reporting process and improve your analytics workflow.

A custom report simply allows you to customize the metrics and dimensions you see in a Google Analytics report. Custom reports are powerful because you can create a report that contains all of the data identified in your measurement plan.

Dashboards also offer a quick and easy way to get a high level view of your critical metrics and segments in one place.

In this lesson you will learn:
- how to create a custom report
- how to create a custom dashboard
- how to share your customizations with coworkers

Custom reports overview
Let’s start by taking a look at custom reports.

A custom report is a report that you create by picking specific dimensions and metrics and deciding how they should be displayed.

To access your custom reports, click the Customization tab. Your reports will be listed in the left navigation under “Custom Reports.” If no custom reports have been created, you will only see an entry for “Overview” under “Custom Reports.”
Creating a custom report

To create a custom report, click the “New Custom Report” button.

First, provide a descriptive name for the report so that you can easily identify it. Let’s create a report called “Saturday Conversions Report.”

Then, choose the report type you want to create:

- The **Explorer** type shows a hierarchy of data tables linked by clickable rows with an over time graph at the top.
- The **Flat Table** shows a single table with all of your data.
- The **Geo** type is similar to the Explorer type, but uses a geographic visualization instead of the time graph.

Regardless of which report type you choose, you’ll need to specify at least one dimension and one metric in your report.

To add each metric to your report, click “add metric.” If you are adding several metrics to your custom report, you can create and name metric groups to keep your report organized.

For this example, let’s call the metric group “Conversions” and add the metrics “Visits,” “Goal 1 Completions” and “Goal 1 Conversion Rate.”

Next, click the button to add each dimension to your report. In the Explorer and Geo types of custom reports, adding more than one dimension in a hierarchy makes it possible for the person viewing the report to drill down into more specific data. In the Flat Table type, you can add up to two dimensions side-by-side in the report.

For this report, we’ll add “Day of week name” as our first dimension. Let’s also add “Hour” as a sub-dimension of day.

Keep in mind that some metrics and dimensions can't be paired in a custom report. For more details, refer to the resources in this lesson.

Next, decide if you want to add a filter to limit the report to a subset of data. Select a dimension, select “Include” or “Exclude,” select the match type you want and then enter the value for the match.
Since this report is just meant to include data for Saturdays, we can create a filter to only show visits that happened on a Saturday.

Finally, if you want the report to be available in different views, other than the one you create the report in, select them from the menu.

Once you’re finished, save the report.

As you can see, the resulting reports looks just like the pre-created reports in the Reporting section of Google Analytics. All of the report tools like the date range selector, the table filter and the secondary dimension option are available for you to use on the custom report.

Notice that the metric group at the top of the report is now customized to read “Conversions.” The dimensions and the metrics in the table are the ones that we selected, and the filter we applied in the custom report settings has included only Saturday, not the other days of the week. If we click into “Saturday,” we’re taken to the hourly breakdown of the conversion data for Saturdays only.

Managing custom reports
To manage your existing custom reports, return to the Custom Reports Overview page. From here, you can choose to edit, copy, share or delete your custom reports.

If you choose to share the custom report, Google Analytics will generate a URL that you can copy and send to other users or host in a document or on a site.

Note that when you share a custom report via a template, you share only the settings for the custom report, you do not share any data. You can send the link to anyone with an Analytics account, and that person can then import the settings.

Dashboards overview
Now, let’s take a look at dashboards.

Dashboards give you an overview of how your properties are performing by displaying summaries of different reports as widgets on a single page.
With a dashboard, you can monitor many metrics at once, so you can quickly check the health of your accounts or see correlations between different reports.

Creating and managing dashboards
To view and manage your dashboards, use the "Dashboards" menu in the Reporting section.

Each view in your Google Analytics account displays a default dashboard that is pre-populated with a few widgets. You can add new widgets to a dashboard by clicking “Add to Dashboard” at the top of any report, or by clicking “Add Widget” from the dashboard menu.

You can customize the layout of your dashboard and drag widgets around to re-organize them. You can also customize or remove any widget on a dashboard, including the default widgets that automatically display in your account. Click the pencil icon in the top corner of each widget to see these customization options.

Like with custom reports, dashboards allow you to choose the specific metrics and dimensions you want displayed in each widget, and add filters to include only the data you find relevant.

You have the option of creating widgets that show you historical data for the date range you select, or ones that show data in real time about the active visitors on your site. You can use any combination of real-time and standard widgets in the dashboards that you create in order to easily compare real-time site usage to overall historical trends.

Sharing dashboards
While by default dashboards are available only in the view in which you create them, you can share them with other people by using the “Share” menu in the action bar. This can be useful if manage reporting for many departments or individuals in your organization.

You have two sharing options.
1. To make the dashboard available to all other users in a view, click “Share Dashboard.”
2. Alternatively, to generate a template to send to other users, like with custom reports, click “Share template link.” Remember, this only shares the dashboard settings, not any data.
Align your dashboard with your measurement plan
Creating a well-organized and useful dashboard can take some time initially, but will build efficiency into your reporting workflow in the long-run. It is well worth the effort!

To ensure your dashboard focuses on the information that is most important for you and your other report users, take some time to review your measurement plan before you begin designing which dashboards and widgets you create.

Conclusion
For more ideas on what types of custom reports and dashboards could be useful to create for your own account, check out the Google Analytics Solutions Gallery.

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