

# Analytics, Sitemap & Search Console

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Today we are doing some back end work to make our website more secure, see how many people are checking us out and help Google find us.

## 1. Google Analytics

Google Analytics is a tool that allows you to see who is looking at your website to help you understand where they came from and how to keep them on your website longer.



It is invaluable for understanding your potential customers behaviors and pinpointing areas for improvement on your website.

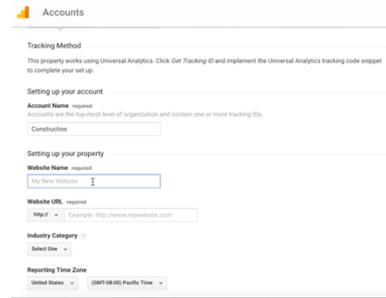
It is a free tool that and we will be installing a free plugin on your website that will allow you to see the basic traffic figures directly from your dashboard.

### 1.1 Setting up Google Analytics

You will need a Google account to set up analytics. If you don't have one yet – [create one here](#).

1. Start by going to [Google Analytics](#).
2. Click the Sign In link at the upper right hand side of the screen and choose Analytics.
3. You will need to sign in to your Google account.
4. Then click Sign Up
5. And fill in the following:

- a. Account Name – if you are managing multiple accounts this would be your management company name for us here it is just the Website Name again.
  - b. Website Name
  - c. Website URL
  - d. Select an Industry Category
  - e. Choose Reporting Time Zone.
  - f. Under Data Sharing Options, check the boxes next to the options that you want.
6. Click Get Tracking ID.
  7. From the Google Analytics Terms of Service Agreement that opens, choose your locality again and click I Accept.



Now your Google Analytics account is set up. Next we are going to install a plugin called Analytics Dashboard which will install the tracking code for us and also show us a preview of our analytics right from the dashboard of our website.

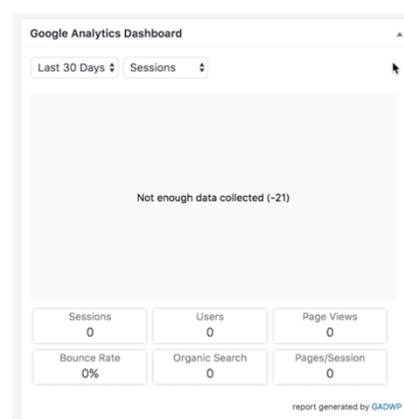
Go to the Dashboard menu of your website > Plugins > Add New. Search for Analytics Dashboard.



Once you install and activate the plugin you will see a new menu item at the bottom of the Dashboard Menu > Google Analytics. Click on this menu item.

Then click the Authorize Plugin button, then click the Get Access Code link. This will open a new window to authorize your plugin to access Google Analytics. Click Allow and copy and paste the code you are given into the Google Analytics Settings plugin and Save Access Code. Then click Save Changes.

Now head over to your dashboard and you will see a new section has been added that shows your analytics. If this is a new analytics account then it will not have any data yet but check back in a few days time to see your visitors.



To move the dashboard module to the top of the page drag and drop it by its header into position. The information in this module is just an overview. If you go back to your Google Analytics account and click on Home, then All Web Site Data you will be able to see a huge amount of analytics options to explore. The main analytics metrics that you see in the overview are:

- Sessions: How many times did people visit your site
- Users: How many unique users visited your site
- Pageviews: How many pages were viewed on your site.
- Bounce Rate: How relevant people found your website – lower the bounce rate the better. If people land on your page and leave again immediately then you will have a high bounce rate and Google is not a fan of this.

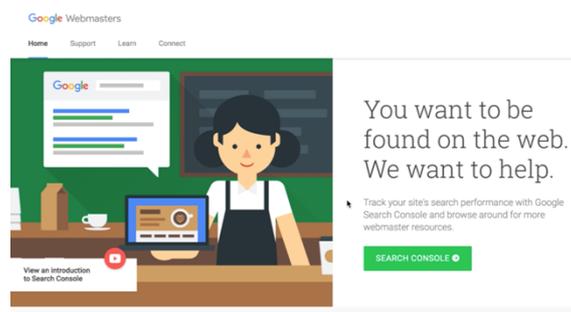
All of your metrics are based on the previous month as standard but you can change the time frame that is being reported on.

## 2. Google Search Console

The Google Search Console is another free tool from Google that allows you to track your website's search performance, add your sitemap and keep up to date with any issues that Google might have with your website.

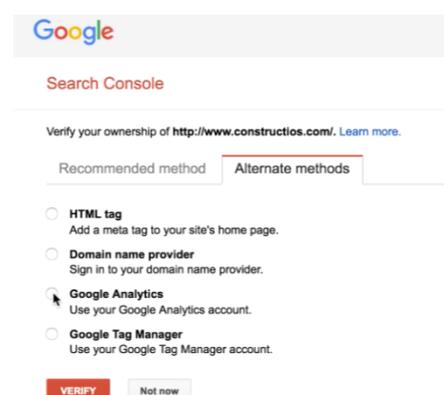
It is important to catch any issues Google has early or they could penalize your website in the search rankings.

It used to be called Google Webmaster Tools and changed name in 2015 to Search Console so to create an account go to [google.com/webmasters](https://google.com/webmasters). You may need to sign in to your Google Account again.



The first thing you will do in the search console is to Add A Property – your website. Your website can be found using two URL's – [www.yoursitename.com](http://www.yoursitename.com) and [yoursitename.com](http://yoursitename.com). You will need to add both of these website names and then tell Google which version you want it to index.

Type in the first of the two URL's and click Add A Property. You will then need to verify that you are the owner of the website and the easiest way to do this is through the Google Analytics option as we already have that installed. If you don't see that option you might need to click the Alternate Methods Tab. Then click Verify.

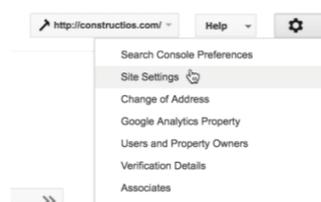


If it sees your Google Analytics code installed then it verifies that you are the owner.

Next click on Home and repeat the process for your website address without the www.

When both versions have been added go to the top right hand corner and click on the settings (gear) icon and choose Site Settings.

We are going to tell Google which version of our website we want them to use. Choose the version and press Save. This is a matter of personal preference but it is better to choose one of the other.



Click back to the dashboard and the next step is to add our Sitemap.

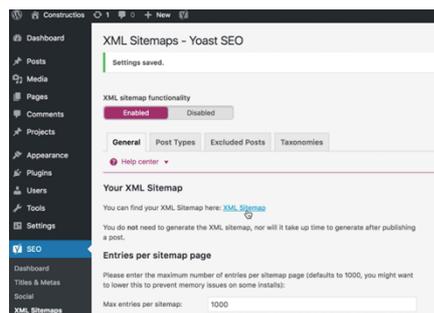
### 3. Adding a Sitemap

A sitemap is a list of the pages on your website in a format that makes them easy to understand for the search engines.

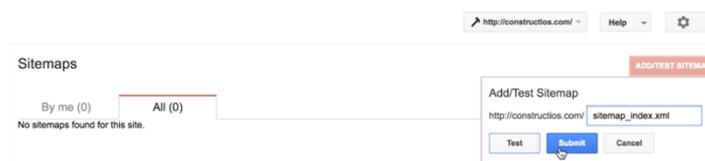
Submitting your sitemap to Google helps its bots to find all of the pages on your website. We will be using Yoast SEO to generate your Sitemap and then manually submitting it to Google.

To generate your sitemap – go back to your website and from the Dashboard Menu choose SEO. Under the Features Tab toggle the Advanced Settings Pages to Enabled and click Save Changes. There will now be more options in the SEO menu and the option we are looking for is XML Sitemaps.

Click on the link XML Sitemap to see where your sitemap is located. Copy the part of the link that comes after your website name and go back to Google Search Console. Under the version of the site you prefer (www. Or non www. ) click on Sitemaps > No Sitemaps to add your sitemap.



Click the red Add / Test Sitemap and paste in your sitemap which should be /sitemap\_index.xml and click Submit.



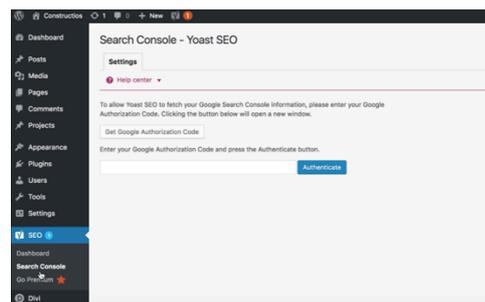
Refresh the page and you can now see your sitemap has been submitted but has not been indexed just yet. There is a lot of advanced functionality in the Google Search Console area but for now we are going to connect your search console to your Yoast plugin so you will see any issues in the back end of your website.

## 4. Connecting your Search Console to your website.

To make it easier to keep an eye on issues that might be detected in the Search Console we are going to connect our account to the Yoast SEO plugin.

This means that we will be able to keep an eye on any changes in the back end of our website instead of having to log in and out of Google Search Console regularly.

Go back to your website and the Dashboard Menu > SEO > Search Console. Similar to authorizing Google Analytics plugin click on the Get Google Authorisation Code and copy and past the code into the box on



your site and Authenticate. Choose the correct profile that you prefer from the dropdown box and click Save Profile.

Now any errors on your site will show up as warnings on your Dashboard if they exist. Go back to your dashboard and you can drag and drop the Yoast SEO module up to the top right hand side of your website. I normally switch off all of the other sections to make my Dashboard cleaner and easier to view.

To switch off modules click the Screen Options tab at the top right hand side of the screen and toggle on and off the sections by checking the boxes beside each section name.

## Its time to take action

- Create Google Analytics Account
- Connect Analytics with Website
- Create Google Search Console Account
- Submit Yoast SEO Sitemap
- Connect Search Console to your website using the Yoast plugin

Now your website is set up as an information hub to gather data about your potential customers. This information will provide you with

invaluable insights about your customers so you can continue to improve your services.

Tomorrow we will be working on creating your three launch posts so you are ready to launch with valuable information for your clients!

See you then.