

Optimizing digital  
marketing performance



# GOOGLE ANALYTICS

## BEST PRACTICES



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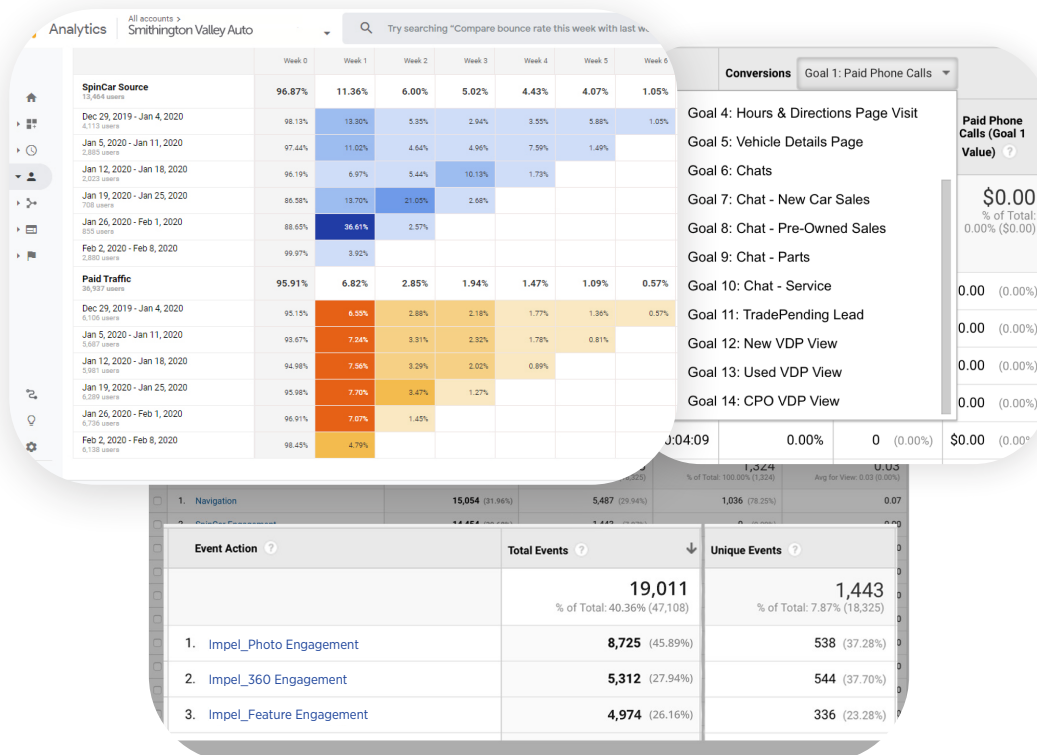
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# INTRODUCTION

Understanding attribution and accurately extracting and using performance data is one of the most critical opportunities facing dealerships, wholesalers and OEMs today. Leveraging the right information at the right time can be a key strategic advantage in determining ROI and subsequent investment decisions. However, the complexity, length of time, number of interactions, and high relative cost of the vehicle shopper journey means attribution and performance measurement are even more of a challenge in the automotive industry, where many factors (including conversion) happen offline.

Platforms like Google Analytics (GA) can enable automotive sellers to more accurately track channel and campaign performance, helping to optimize marketing strategies, campaigns and budgets. GA is a best-in-class platform that can integrate with all of a seller's digital channels, using automation to enable real-time performance tracking.

As Impel has worked with thousands of dealerships to implement advanced digital merchandising solutions and integrate our products with our customers' Google Analytics dashboards, we have developed best practices that will enable sellers to leverage GA to its maximum potential.





# ORGANIZING GOOGLE ANALYTICS FOR SUCCESS

As you set up your GA dashboards, ensure you establish a proper Google Analytics hierarchy when creating accounts. This will help you keep track of multiple properties and websites across your dealership or rooftops. Following are examples of available options:



**Organization** - The organization represents a company. One organization can encompass multiple GA accounts.



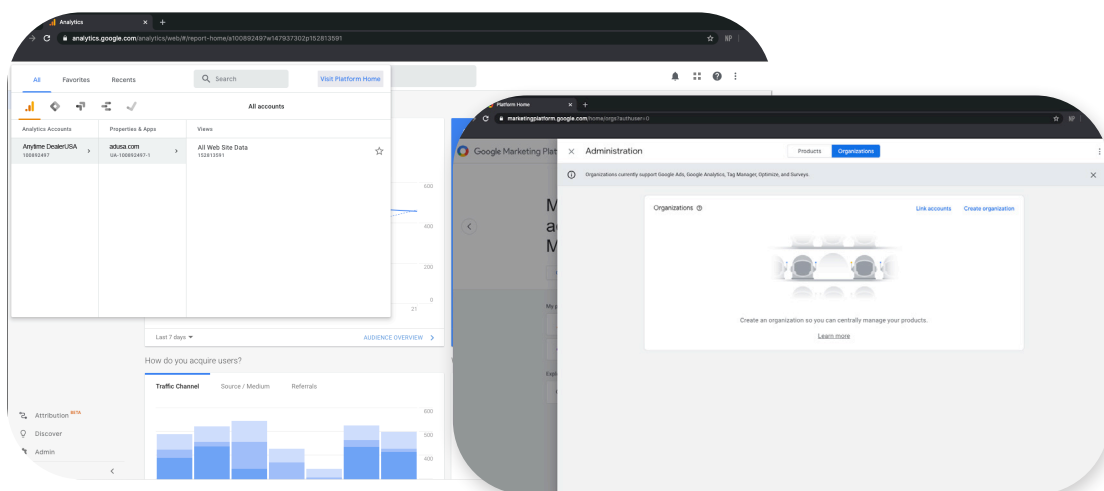
**Account** - An account is your access point for Analytics and is usually the topmost level of organization. Using Google Analytics requires at least one (sometimes several) accounts. You can assign one property to each account or multiple properties to one account. Every account can hold up to 50 properties.



**Property** - A property is a website or app. For example, an individual dealership website would count as one property. Each property can support up to 25 views.



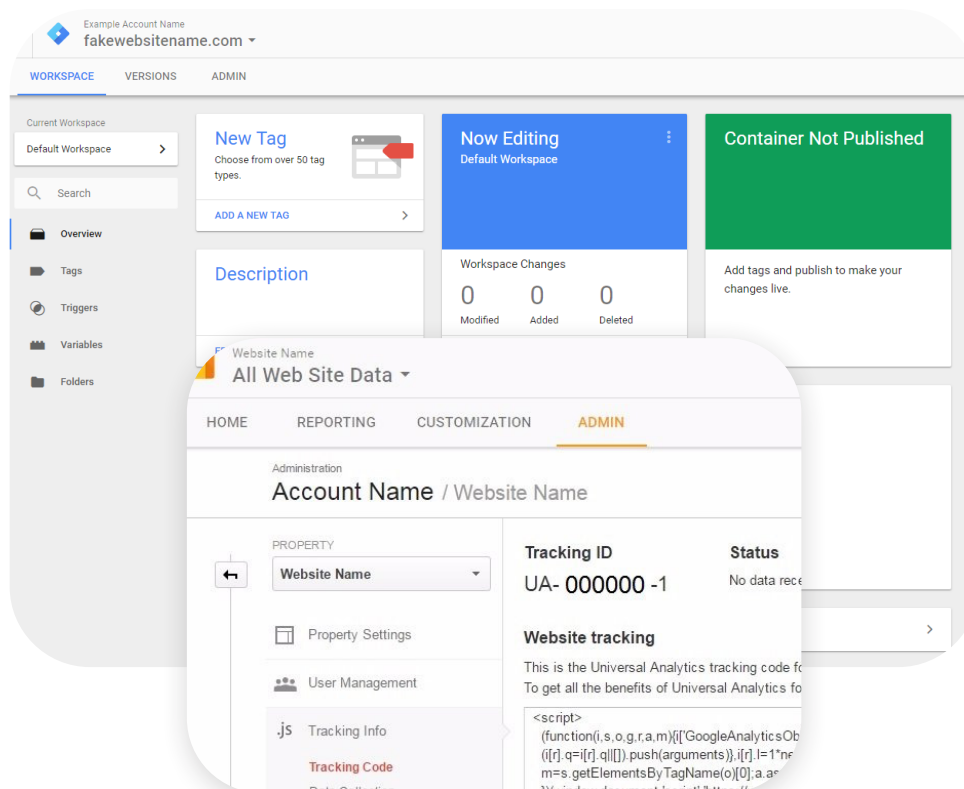
**View** - A view is your access point for reports; a defined view of data from a property. You give users access to a view so that they can see the reports based on that view's data.





# ENSURING ACCURATE TRACKING

A **UA tracking code** allows Google Analytics to track each web page effectively. Ensure that a UA tracking code has been placed on every page of your dealership website(s). As you proceed to implement UA tracking codes through **Google Tag Manager (GTM)**, you'll also want to ensure that the GTM tracking code is on every page of your website. This is what allows pages to show up in views and reports. Without UA tracking codes, data will not populate within Google Analytics.



# OPTIMIZING YOUR DASHBOARD & REPORTS

For optimal efficiency, set up separate views within each GA property. This best practice will allow you to leverage each view for specific uses, as well as compare and contrast data to gain contextual insights into results. In addition, practical views such as “Test View” and “Vendor View” enable practical applications such as isolating a test product or tactic within GA and integrating vendor product results and performance while limiting broader GA access (more on this later).

Some of the most popular views are:



**Raw View** - This shows you all of your unfiltered data.



**Filtered View** - Filters out internal traffic from your dealership’s IP addresses within the company, as well as known bot and spam traffic.



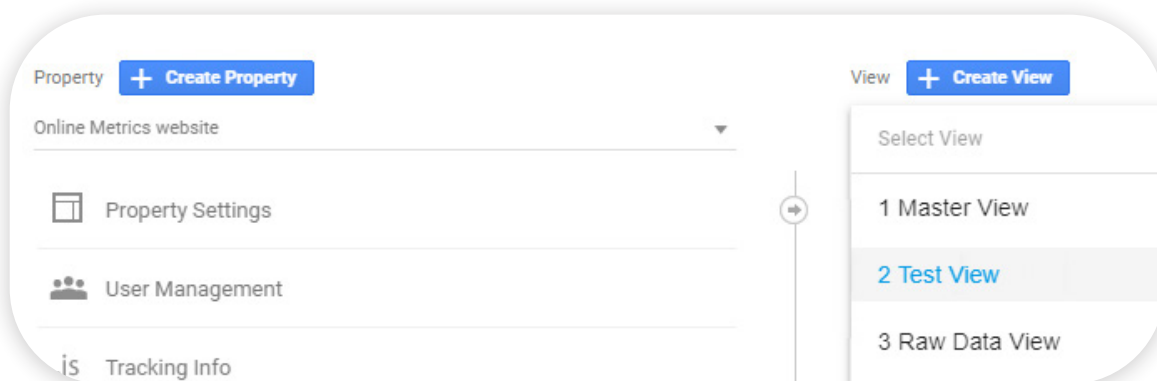
**Test View** - Tests filters and other changes before implementing on other views or properties.



**Goals View** - Has performance metric goals such as VDP goals, event or campaign tracking goals, and any other measurable goals that a dealership would like to set up and track.



**Vendor View(s)** - This can be created specifically for each vendor that requests or is granted access.



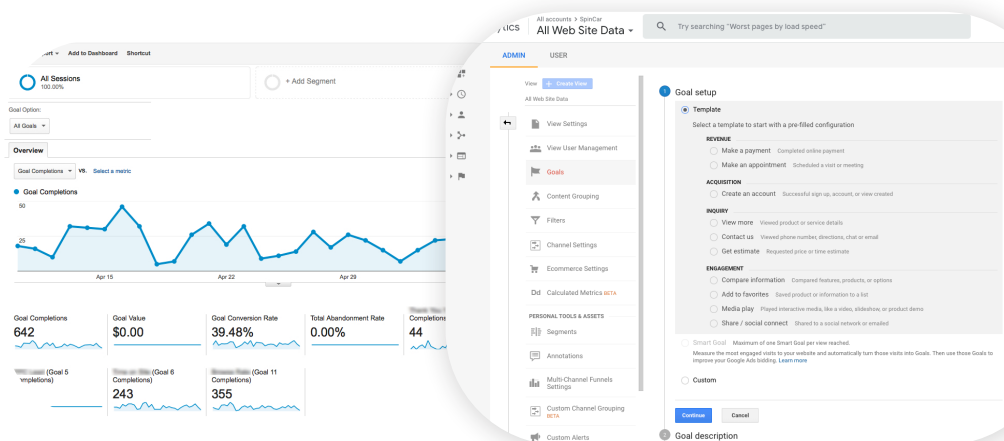
# CREATING MEASURABLE BUSINESS GOALS

Adding goal completions in Google Analytics is critically important. Not having goals is like attempting to navigate without a compass. Goals can serve as the foundation for an accurate assessment of which advertising, engagement and conversion efforts are the most effective and lucrative. They are also essential for attribution modeling. For actionable data that can help drive effective decision-making, go beyond the default website view and set up specific business and performance goals that you can monitor consistently.

While direct lead generation measurement is important, website and VDP engagement metrics such as time on VDP, time on site, specific feature or photo engagement and others, are statistically proven to more directly correlate to lead, conversion and sales results. You can leverage this real-time data to quickly make investment and operational decisions.

Within your **"Goals View"**, consider some examples of specific views:

- 1 Dedicated goals against lead generation (primarily phone calls, emails and/or contact form submissions).
- 2 Dedicated goals against VDP views and engagement metrics by inventory type (New, Used & CPO) as applicable.
- 3 Service goals - Set up dedicated goals against one or several service page views. Include all service pages (oil change, tires, coupon pages, etc.).
- 4 F&I goals - Given how critical finance and insurance are to unit margin and dealer profitability, include specific F&I and/or product and service goals if you have dedicated F&I pages, tactics or campaigns.

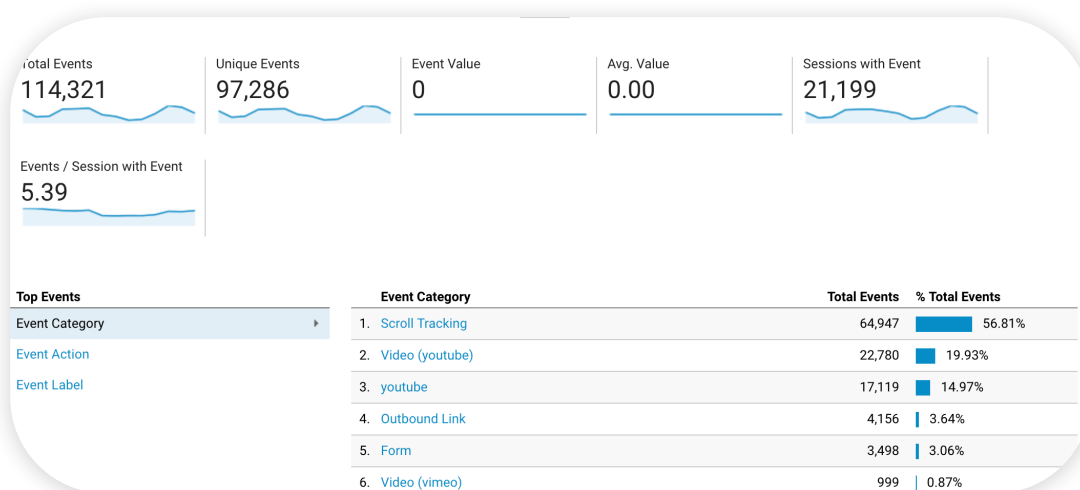






# UNDERSTANDING DIGITAL MARKETING RESULTS

Specific marketing tactics are referenced as “events” in Google Analytics. By setting up event tracking using GTM codes, you will obtain rich insight into the results of specific marketing tactics such as advertising campaigns, and specific tactics like calls-to-action, promotional call-outs, Kelly Blue Book, Carfax, video marketing, and others. With this data you can determine and quantify which tactics are effective and which need to be improved, modified or discarded.

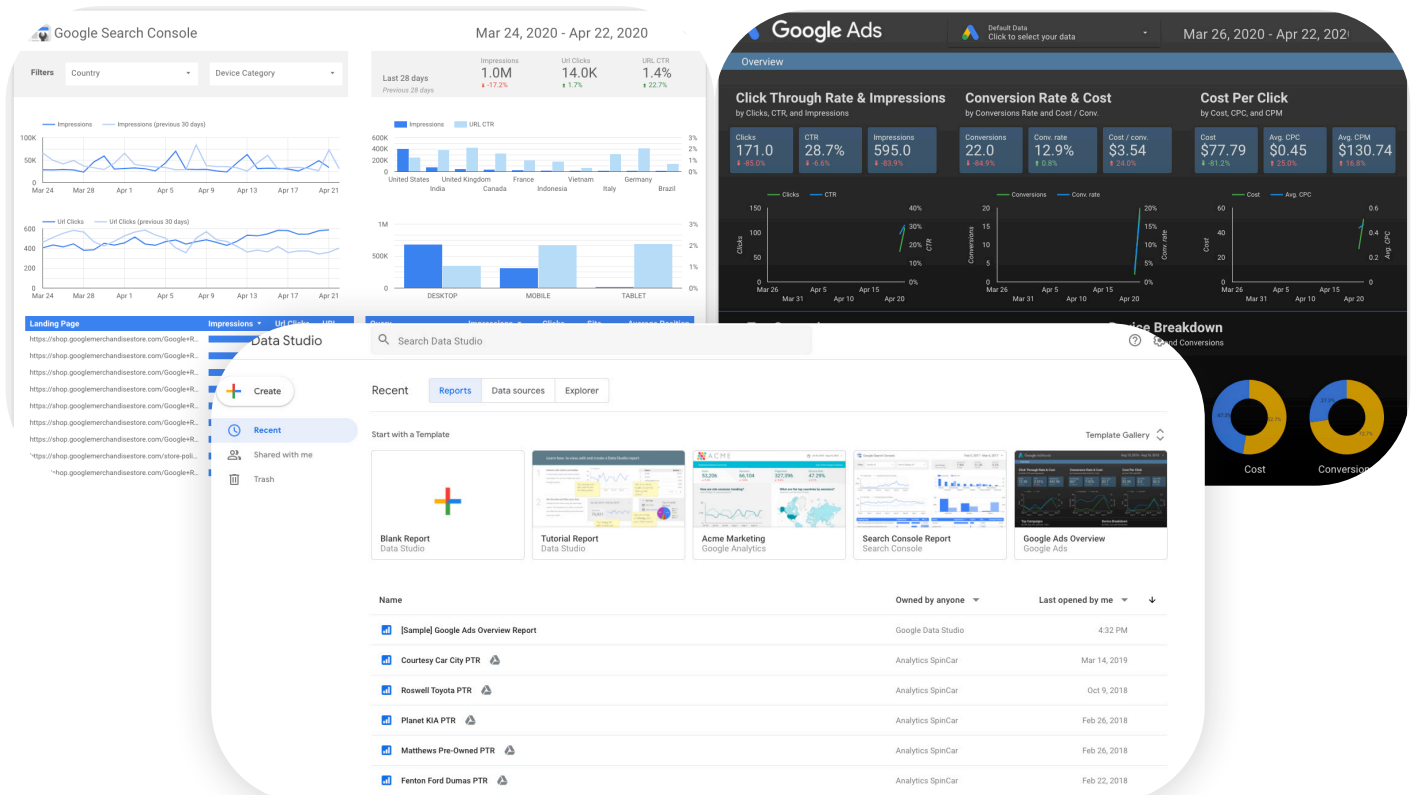




# ENABLING YOUR ORGANIZATION WITH DATA

Assign user permissions to the people and/or organizations that require access to GA data to track performance, report results, and make timely decisions. Note that you can give user permissions for an entire Google Analytics account, a property in an account, or a specific view within a property. GA can help you distribute and democratize data at a glance, equipping your teams with the right data at their fingertips to make nimble operational decisions.

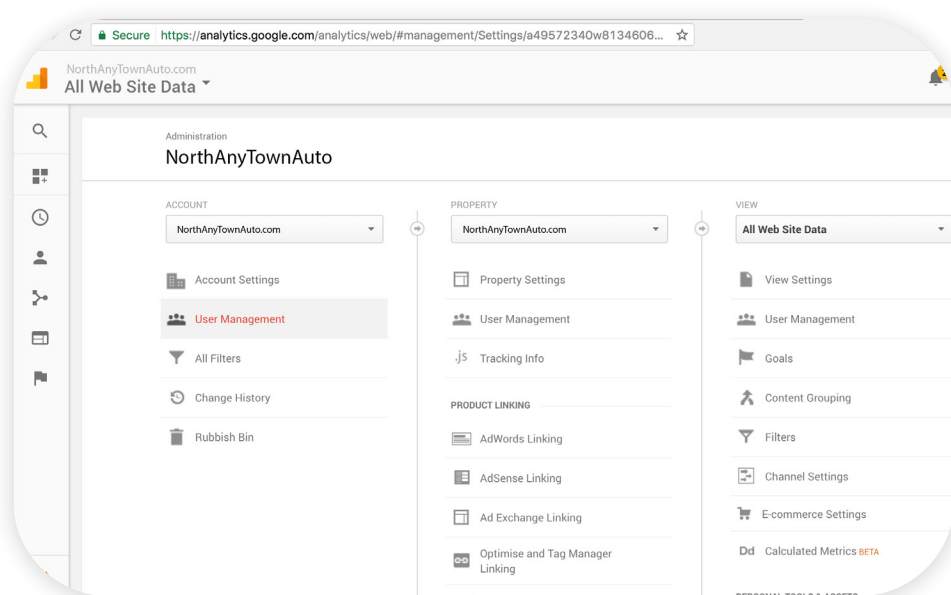
**Google Data Studio (GDS)** is a great tool for effective reporting and fast data consumption and dissemination. GDS aggregates and translates Google Analytics data into visual, intuitive reporting that helps you understand trends and results at a glance. Effective use of GDS will increase your organization's ability to quickly interpret and share data.



# EFFECTIVELY COLLABORATING WITH EXTERNAL VENDORS

Tracking and integrating data from external vendor solutions is a great way to centralize all of your performance data in one place. These quick tips will help ensure your data remains untouched:






- 1 Note that you can give user permissions for an entire Google Analytics account, a property in an account, or a specific view within a property. You can leverage this focused approach to increase external partner collaboration while maintaining data firewalls.
- 2 You can also create vendor views based on their specific event or solution, which allows them visibility into the performance you are seeing while limiting access to other views or the broader dashboard.



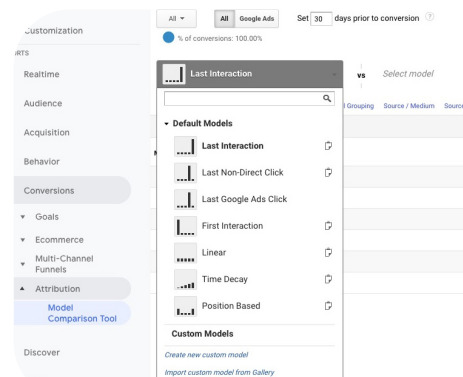


# UNDERSTANDING ATTRIBUTION

Attribution is the art and science of assigning the credit for a conversion to the appropriate channel or tactic. Not every visitor to a website converts immediately on their first visit. Instead, many visitors return to a website numerous times before completing a goal. If a visitor returns to your website many different times, through multiple channels, “attribution” can quickly become a challenge. Consider the following abbreviated example of a typical visitor journey:

-  **First visit:** Click on a Google ad.
-  **Second visit:** Organic search.
-  **Third visit:** Organic search.
-  **Fourth visit:** Click on a retargeting ad.
-  **Fifth visit:** Direct visit (conversion occurs here).

The default position of Google Analytics and most CRM systems is to assign 100% of the conversion value to the last source. This is called “last-click” attribution modeling, meaning that whatever source produced last click before the conversion gets all the credit. In this case, the fifth visit (“Direct visit”) would receive 100% of the credit for the conversion, even though Google Ads served as this visitor’s introduction to the business, and retargeting efforts and organic search contributed as well.



There are dashboards in Google Analytics that allow you to visualize these journeys, thus allowing you to see which channels are contributing to the conversion process without receiving 100% of the credit. Channels that “create awareness” for first-time visitors or that help shoppers move along the sales funnel are almost always undervalued in most systems, while organic and direct efforts can be overemphasized, since people who already know about you will return to you directly or organically.



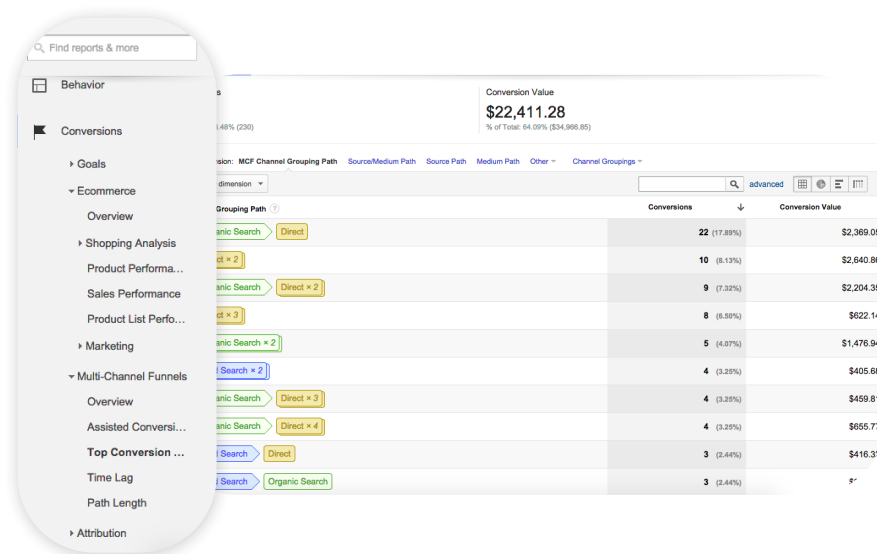
# UNDERSTANDING ATTRIBUTION

Considering other models ensures you maintain a holistic view of shoppers' paths to conversion and all of the tactics that assist in attribution along the journey. This comprehensive assessment enables more robust and strategic decision-making and investment decisions.

These additional models and conversion pathways can be found in Google Analytics in the **"Conversions"** Report View.

Within Conversions, you will see "Multi-Channel Funnels" and the following options:

- 1 **Overview:** Visualizes multi-channel conversion at a glance.
- 2 **Assisted Conversions:** Shows the role of channels in driving assisted conversions.
- 3 **Top Conversion Paths:** Visualizes and ranks multi-channel assisted conversion paths.



The automotive shopper journey is now primarily online: as of 2019, 61% of total vehicle shopping time is spent online (Cox). Your digital showroom is the biggest driver of sales. Superior digital merchandising and marketing are crucial to increasing quality traffic and inventory turn. It's essential to accurately understand the performance of your channels, campaigns and tactics, which will enable your dealership to optimize digital strategy and execution. Implementing these Google Analytics best practices will enable your dealership to optimize ROI while capturing a greater share of the market.

