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UTM links: finding out which campaign brought each visit

SEO & Marketing

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UTM links: finding out which campaign brought each visit

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A UTM link is a normal address on your site with **tags added at the end** saying where the person who clicked came from: which e-mail, which post, which ad. Google Analytics reads them and shows you, by campaign, how many visits and how many contacts each brought. Without them, everything that comes from an e-mail or a social network falls into the “direct” or “other” bucket.

The tags

Tag	What it says	Example
`utm_source`	Where the click came from (the place)	`newsletter`, `facebook`
`utm_medium`	The type of channel	`email`, `social`, `cpc`
`utm_campaign`	The name of the campaign	`october-promo`
`utm_content` **(optional)**	Which version: button or image	`top-button`
`utm_term` **(optional)**	The paid keyword, for a search ad	`emergency-plumber`

A complete link looks like this:

```
https://asuaempresa.co.mz/promo/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=october-promo
```

Creating and using them, step by step

1. **Decide the name** of each source, channel and campaign before you start, and write them in a sheet. Analytics tells upper from lower case: `Email` and `email` show up as different things.

2. **Build the address** by adding `?` after the page address, then the tags separated by `&`. If the address already has a `?`, the tags join with `&`. A link builder (Google has a free one) avoids mistakes.

3. **Use it only where the click starts outside**: the e-mail, the post, the ad, the QR code, the signature. See **e-mail marketing without burning your domain** and **sharing on social media**.

4. **Click your own link** after placing it, in a private window, and open Analytics' realtime report to see the visit appear with the right campaign.

5. **Read the results** under Acquisition, in the traffic acquisition report, where source, medium and campaign appear. See **what Analytics and Search Console tell you**.

A sheet of names so you do not get lost

Within a few months there are dozens of links and nobody remembers what `campaign1` was meant to say. Keep a simple spreadsheet with the columns *date*, *source*, *medium*, *campaign*, *where it was used* and *full address*. Always write in lower case, with no spaces (use hyphens) and with names that someone new on the team would understand. It is what separates a useful report from a list of acronyms.

Never put UTM on links inside your own site.
When someone clicks an internal link with tags, Analytics may start crediting the visit to that tag and lose where the person really came from. It is one of the commonest mistakes. Do not put UTM on links to sites that are not yours either.

Tags make the address long and ugly.
To share it, shorten it with a service you trust. But not for campaign e-mails, where spam filters distrust shorteners. If a link with UTM ends up being indexed, the canonical should point at the clean address (see **the canonical**).

NEED A HAND?

Do your campaign visits not appear in Analytics, or does the site not open with the UTM link? Tell us the full link and what happens.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

Google Analytics: setting it up and what to look at first →

- **Google Analytics or Search Console** →
- **E-mail marketing without burning your domain** →
- **Support Policy** →

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