

Google Analytics - Data collection principles

Technology

Google Analytics is implemented with "page tags". In Google Analytics, a page tag is called the Tracking Code which is JavaScript code that the website owner adds to every page of the website. This code has been modified by QPR to allow wider reporting capabilities and to function in the QPR Portal environment. The tracking code runs in the visitor's browser and collects visitor data and sends it to a Google data collection server as part of a request for a web beacon.

The tracking code sets first party cookies on visitor's computer. These cookies store anonymous information such as whether the visitor has been to the site before (new or returning visitor), the timestamp of the current visit, and the referrer site or campaign that directed the visitor to the page.

Limitations

Ad filtering programs and extensions (such as Firefox's Adblock and NoScript) can block the Google Analytics Tracking Code. This prevents some traffic and users from being tracked, and may lead to holes in the collected data. JavaScript needs to be available and enabled in the browser.

Blocking or deleting Google Analytics cookies may impact data accuracy. Without cookies being set, Google Analytics cannot collect data.

Google Analytics uses sampling in generation of some of its reports. Google Analytics limits reports to 500,000 randomly sampled visits at the profile level for its calculations.

Privacy

Whenever someone visits a website that uses Google Analytics, if JavaScript is enabled in the browser, then Google tracks that visit via the user's IP address in order to determine the user's approximate geographic location. However, the IP address is not shown on any reports as it is against the Google Analytics privacy policy to store personally identifiable information.