

Breaking Down Silos:

Creating a University-Wide View of the Student Journey in Google Analytics

Northeastern University



PEPPERLAND
ALWAYS ON INBOUND MARKETING

Hello!



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Download Slide Deck: <http://bit.ly/eduweb17>

#EduWeb17

Northeastern University

- Top 40 private university, best known for experiential learning and research
- Based in Boston, with a network of regional campuses in emerging markets
- Focused on driving new education innovations including flexible, professionally-aligned credentials available around the world



Where We Began

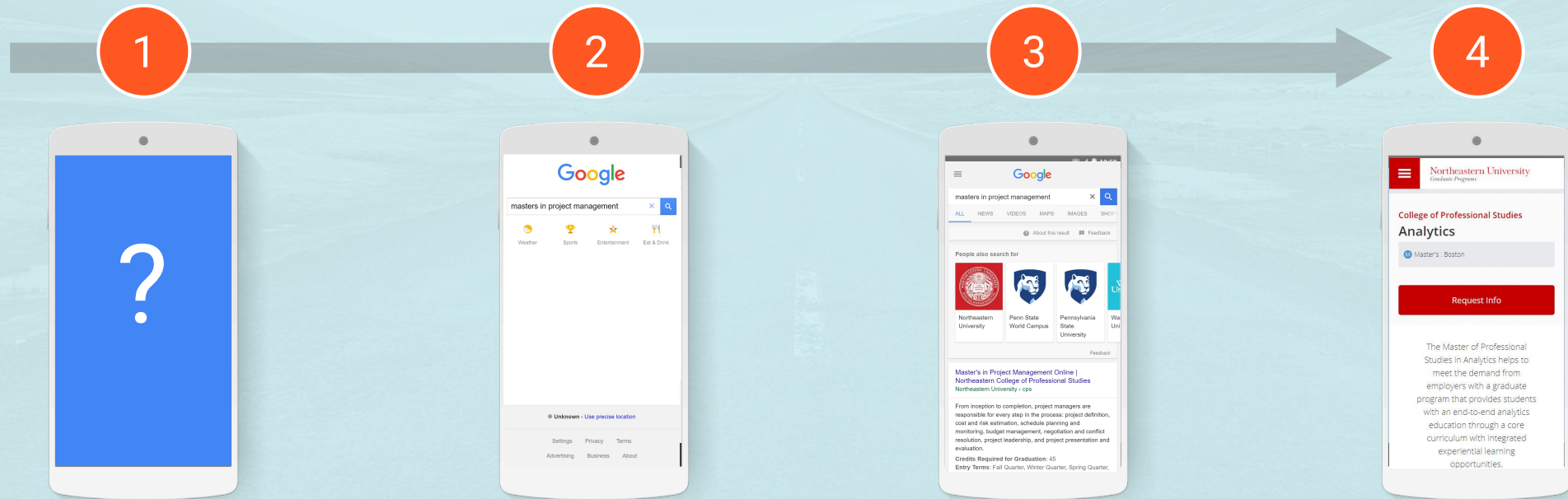


Increasing Digital Maturity for Marketing

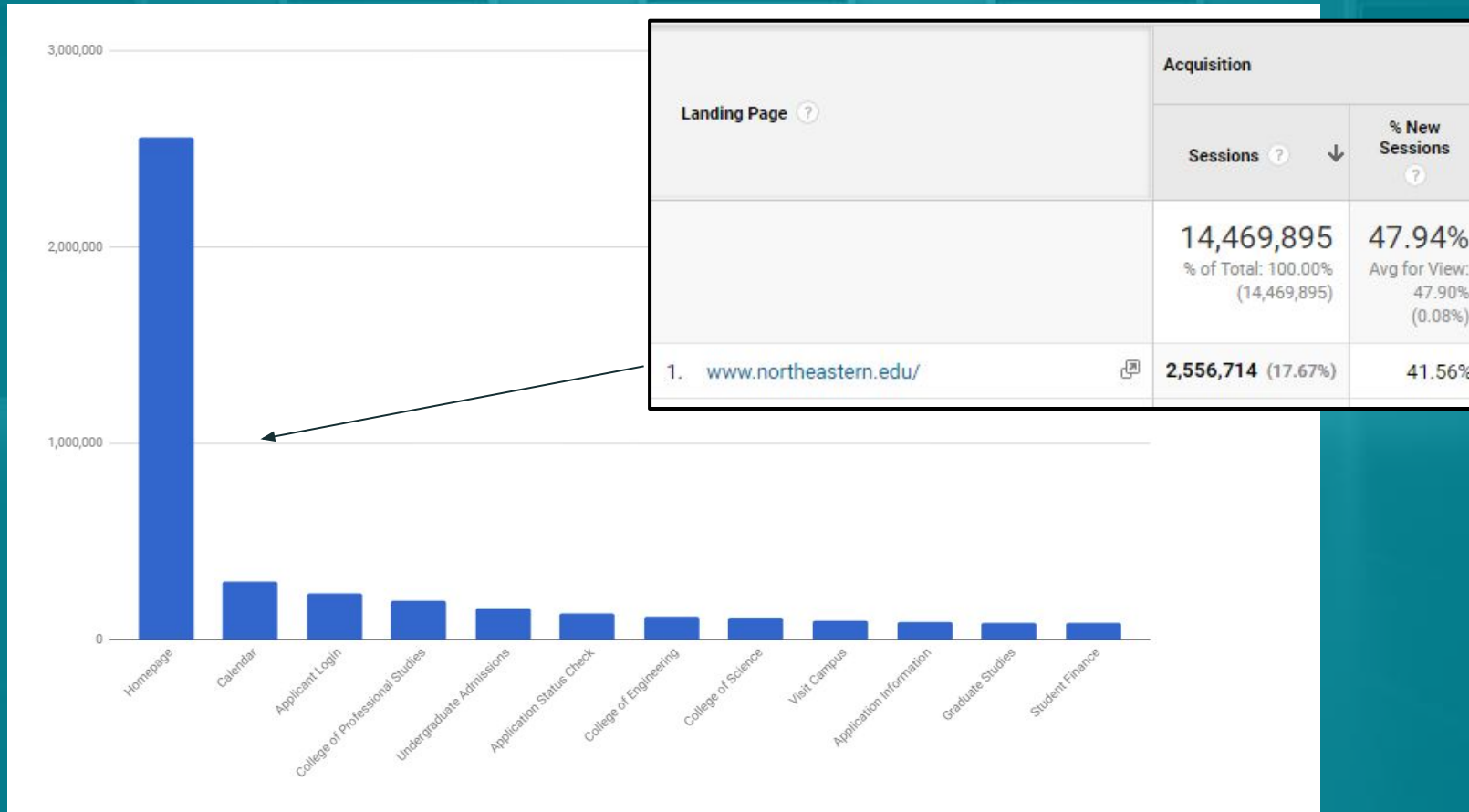


What Was Obvious

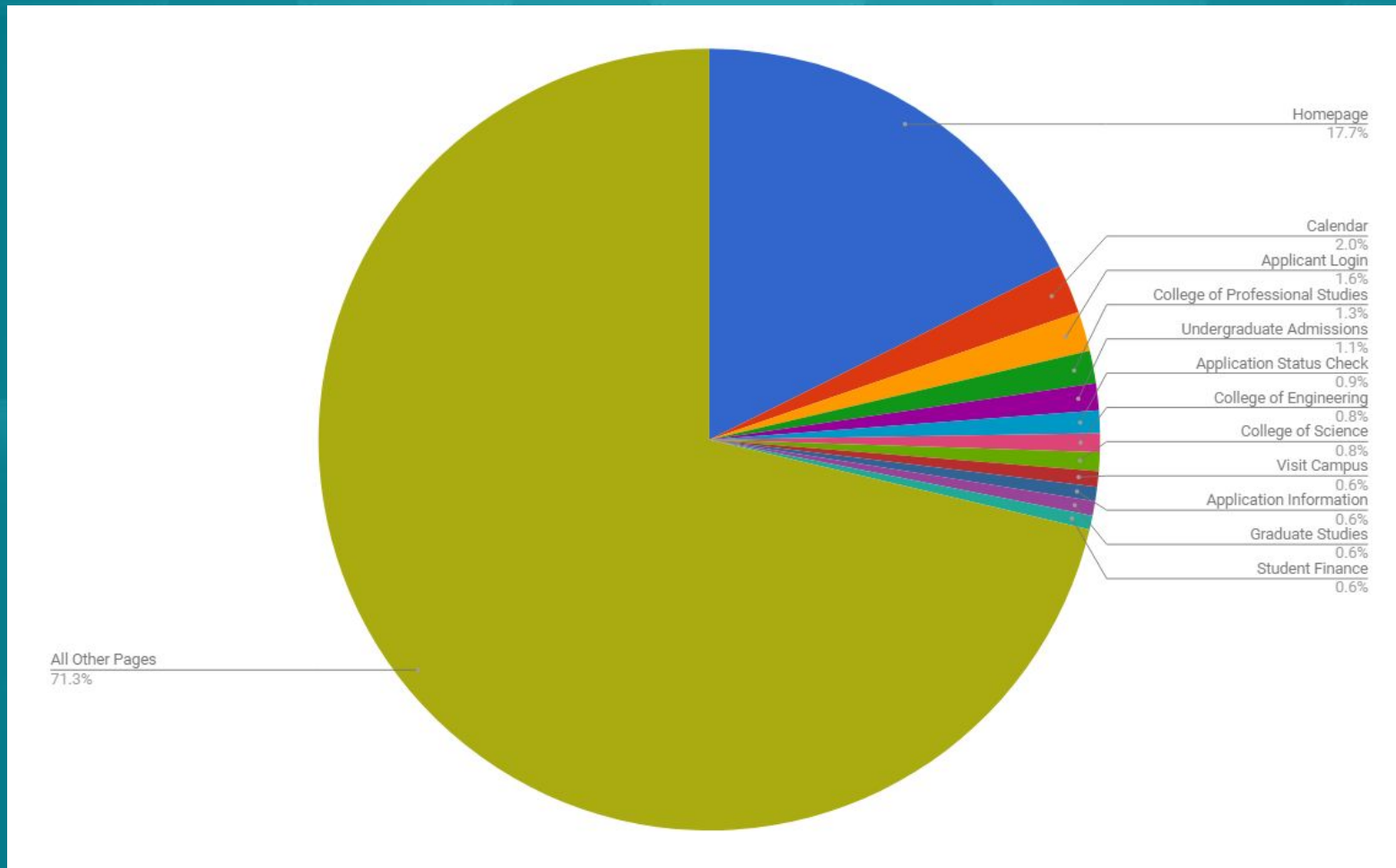
- Our websites had become our **#1 recruitment tool**.
- **60% of traffic** was coming from search engines.



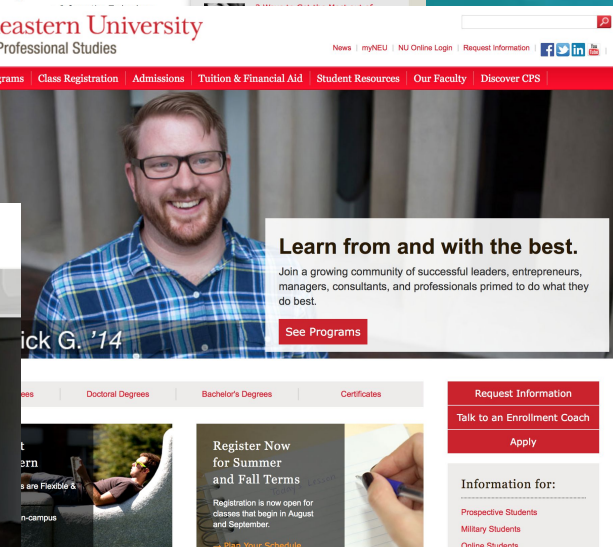
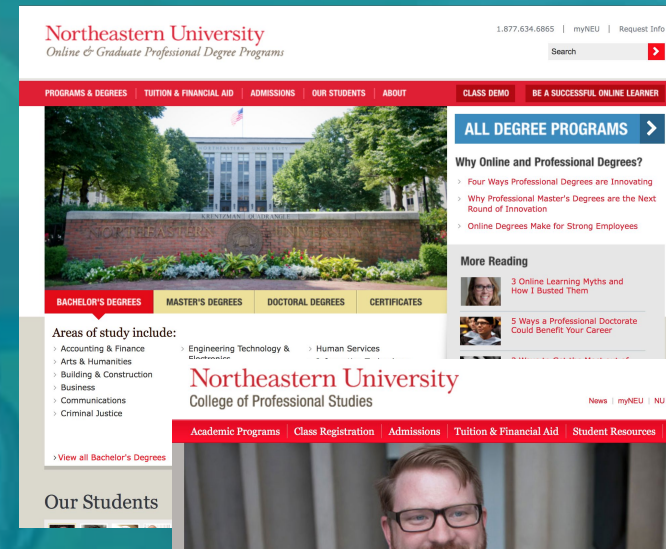
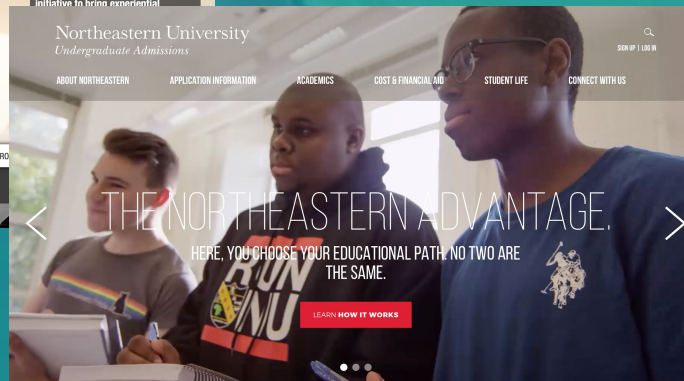
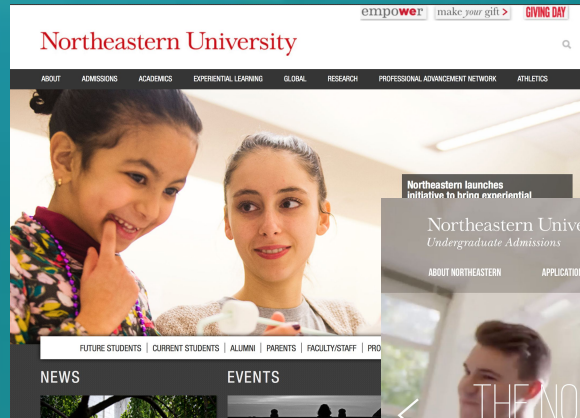
People start on our homepage, right?



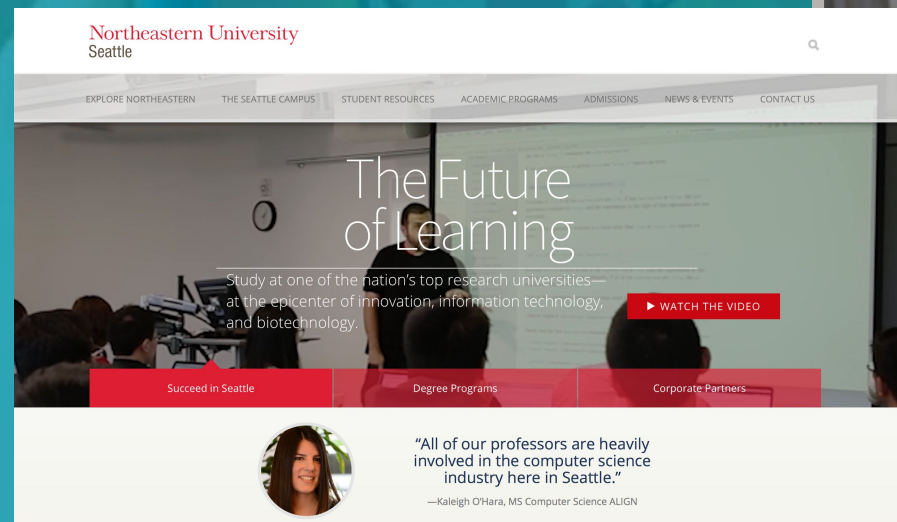
Less than $\frac{1}{5}$ actually do



The Big Surprise



x1200



We Couldn't Trust Our Data

- Why is our own domain referring traffic?
- Are those visitors really people?
- What are those spammy websites?
- What is the ROI of our campaigns?
- Is this really everything?

Source / Medium ?	Referral Path ?	Acquisition
		Sessions ? ↓
		17,333 % of Total: 2.87% (604,245)
1. northeastern.edu / referral	/	5,492 (31.69%)
2. northeastern.edu / referral	/neuhome/academics/departments-programs.html	1,442 (8.32%)
3. northeastern.edu / referral	/neuhome/academics/colleges-schools.html	1,251 (7.22%)
4. northeastern.edu / referral	/graduate/programs/information-systems/	832 (4.80%)
5. northeastern.edu / referral	/search/results.html	804 (4.64%)
6. northeastern.edu / referral	/graduate/programs/engineering-management/	480 (2.77%)
7. northeastern.edu / referral	/undergraduate/academic-programs/	475 (2.74%)
8. northeastern.edu / referral	/graduate/programs/electrical-and-computer-engineering/	448 (2.58%)
9. northeastern.edu / referral	/uhcs/access-to-care/nu-health-requirements/	370 (2.13%)
10. northeastern.edu / referral	/graduate/prospective-students/admissions-process/colleges/	313 (1.81%)
11. northeastern.edu / referral	/graduate/programs/civil-engineering/	281 (1.62%)
12. northeastern.edu / referral	/graduate/programs/industrial-engineering/	280 (1.62%)
13. northeastern.edu / referral	/calendar/	248 (1.43%)
14. northeastern.edu / referral	/graduate/programs/mechanical-engineering/	214 (1.23%)

A silhouette of a cowboy on a horse, wearing a hat and holding a lasso, is shown in profile, chasing a group of four cats across a field. The scene is set against a bright, hazy background, likely a sunset or sunrise. The text "No Coordination, No Governance" is overlaid in the center in a white, sans-serif font.

No Coordination, No Governance

Bridging Silos through Networks

- Defined high priorities, scope of effort
- Helped me build buy-in
- Refined opportunities and challenges ahead
- Provided support to sustain the effort

Digital Operations Group

- Who has a stake in this?
- Who do I need help from?
- Who can I offer help to?
- How do I organize us around tackling the problem?

The Roadmap

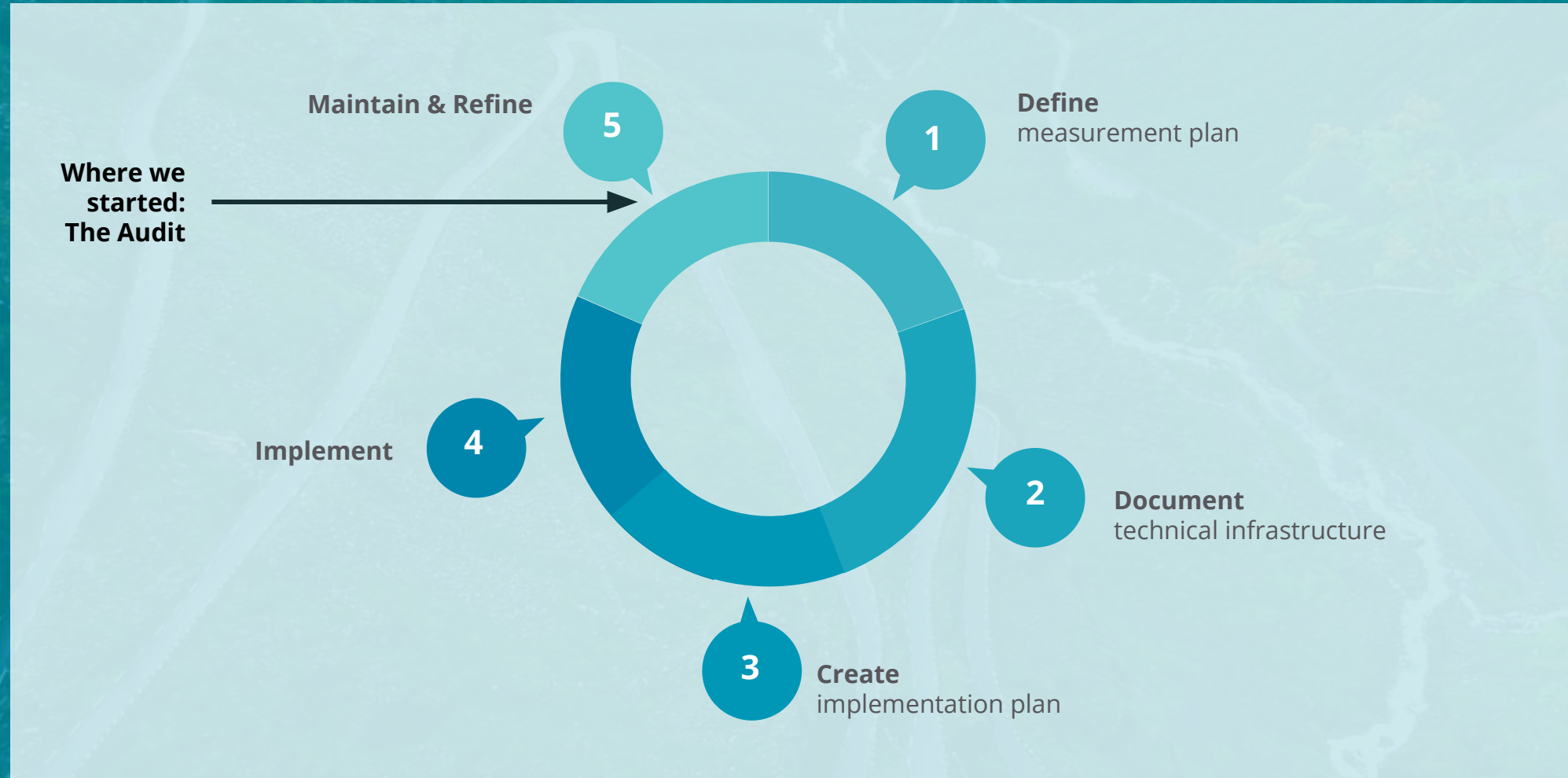
1. Define the problem and approach to fix it
2. Outsource to help develop strategy and move quickly
3. Start developing capabilities in-house
4. Evangelize the value of the data and how we'll use it



Developing a Strategy



The Typical Implementation Roadmap



The Audit

- Audited existing implementations
- Hundreds of “sites”
- Focused on issues related to data quality
- Created scorecard to measure health

Status	Explanation	Value
Green	Working as expected. No action required.	6.05
Orange	Partially working, or not working in an optimal way.	3
Red	Not working or not implemented. Action required.	0

Scorecard Summary for GA Property: Northeastern.edu			
Property ID: UA-XXXXXXX-1			
November 2016: 775,227 Sessions			
Average Time on site = 2:23			
AdWords spend = Unknown			
Operational Since: April 30, 2007			
	Weight	Status	Weighted Score
1 Google Analytics Account Set-Up and Governance	1	Orange	3
2 GTM Configured	1	Red	0
3 Measurement Strategy & SDR	1	Orange	3
4 Adwords & WMT Data	1	Orange	3
5 Site Search Tracking	1	Green	6
6 File Download Tracking	1	Red	0
7 Outbound Link Tracking	1	Orange	3
8 Form Completion Tracking	2	Red	0
9 Video Tracking	0.5	Red	0
10 Error Page Tracking	1	Red	0
11 Transaction Tracking	1	Red	0
12 Event Tracking	1	Red	0
13 Goal Setup	1	Red	0
14 Funnel Setup	1	Red	0
15 Visitor Labelling	1	Red	0
16 Campaign Tracking	1	Orange	3
Quality Score (QS) out of 100:			21

<http://bit.ly/eduweb17>

Major Issues Identified And Resolved:

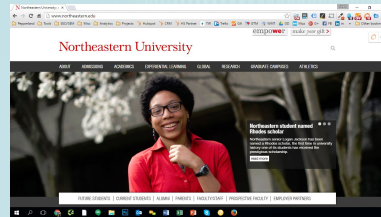
- Self-Referrals
- Old version of Google Analytics
- Placed in wrong area
- Standard features not enabled:
 - Bot Filtering
 - Demographic/Interest Reports
 - Enhanced Link Attribution
 - Filters
- Unmanaged access

The screenshot displays the Google Analytics interface with several key elements highlighted:

- Advertising Features:** A section with a toggle for "Enable Demographics and Interest Reports" set to "OFF".
- Acquisition:** A sidebar menu with "Sessions" selected, showing a count of 8,203.
- Source / Medium:** A table header with a filter icon.
- Enhanced link attribution:** A section with a toggle for "Enhanced link attribution" set to "OFF".
- Bot Filtering:** A section with a toggle for "Exclude all hits from known bots and spiders" set to "OFF".
- Filters:** A table with columns for Rank, Filter Name, and Filter Type. The table is currently empty, displaying the message "There is no data for this view."

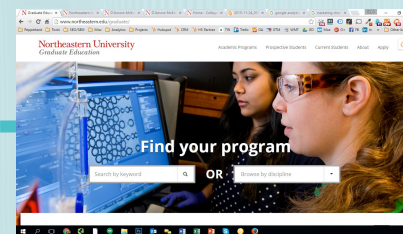
Visibility of the Journey was Fragmented

Homepage



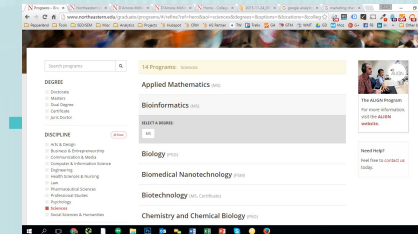
UA-XXXXXXXX-10

Graduate Admissions



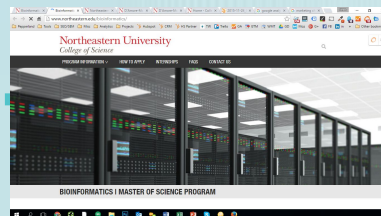
UA-XXXXXXXX-3

Graduate Programs



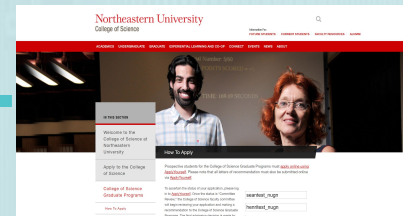
UA-XXXXXXXX-3

College of Science



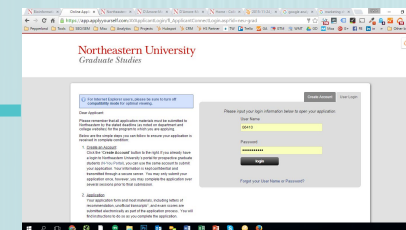
UA-XXXXXXXX-8

How To Apply



UA-XXXXXXXX-8

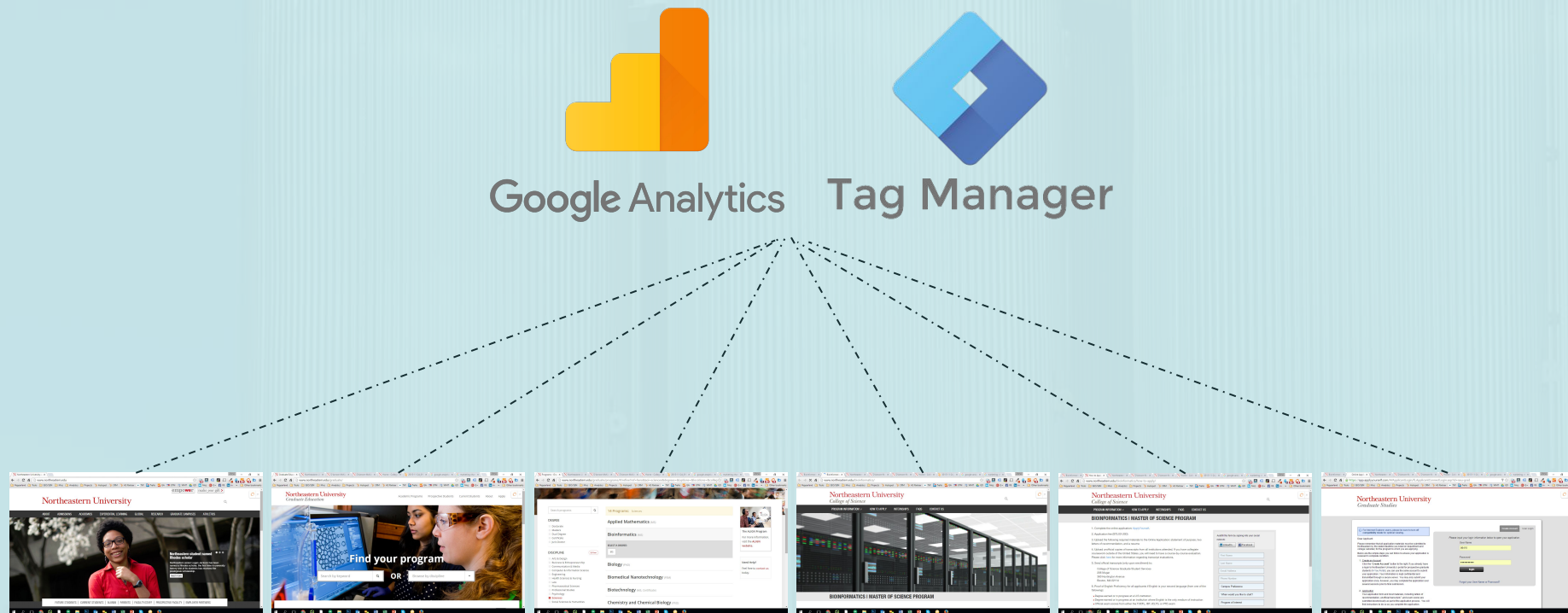
Apply



UA-XXXXXXXX-5

The Solution: A Roll-Up Account

A single Google Analytics property capturing ALL Northeastern University websites.



Deciding What To Measure

1. Get input from stakeholders
2. Tie your website back to your strategic objectives
3. What tactics are helping you meet those objectives?
4. Pick Your KPIs
5. Define Targets

Measurement Plan Worksheet

The first step in developing a digital analytics infrastructure is defining the objectives of your website, answering the question "Why does my website exist and how does it help us meet our business goals?" To do this we must follow this process:

- 1) Align website strategy to overall business objectives. Set no more than three.
- 2) Define KPI's that will enable us to measure the success of those objectives.
- 3) Define targets for those KPI's from historic data, industry benchmarks & resource availability.
- 4) Identify necessary segments.

Next, these objectives, KPI's, and targets will be used to develop an implementation plan and analytics solution that will enable key stakeholders to understand performance and spot opportunities. Please use the worksheet below to begin this process:

Key Stakeholders:

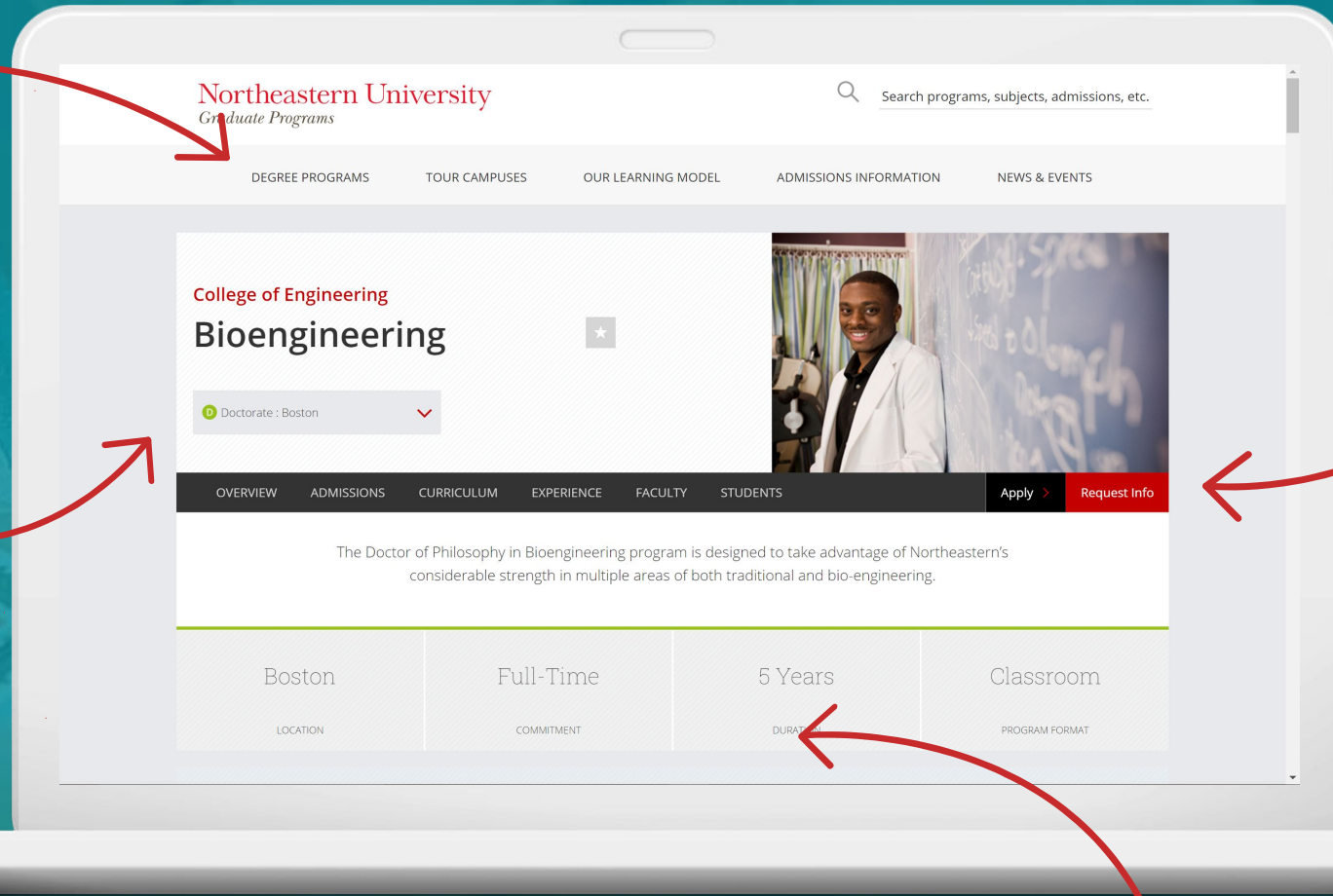
Stakeholder Name	Title / Role	Phone / Email
George Harrison	VP of Marketing	gman@thebeatles.com
Paul McCartney	Director of Analytics	macca@thebeatles.com
John Lennon	Sr. Brand Manager	flamingole@thebeatles.com
Ringo Starr	User Experience Analyst	justadrummer@thebeatles.com

Objective 1: Increase brand awareness			
Goals	Increase branded organic search traffic	# organic sessions	6,000/month
	Increase social shares	% social shares	6% social share conversion rate
	Increase recurring visits	% Returning Visitors	45% returning visitors
Desired Segments (e.g., Traffic Sources, Geographic Location)			
1	Branded organic traffic		
2	New vs returning visitors		
3	Sessions with social shares		

If possible, please provide an example of where the above referenced items may occur on the website.

Which Interactions Matter?

Does the new navigation increase program comparisons and discovery?



Does the drop-down help users compare options?

Does the page drive info-requests and applications?

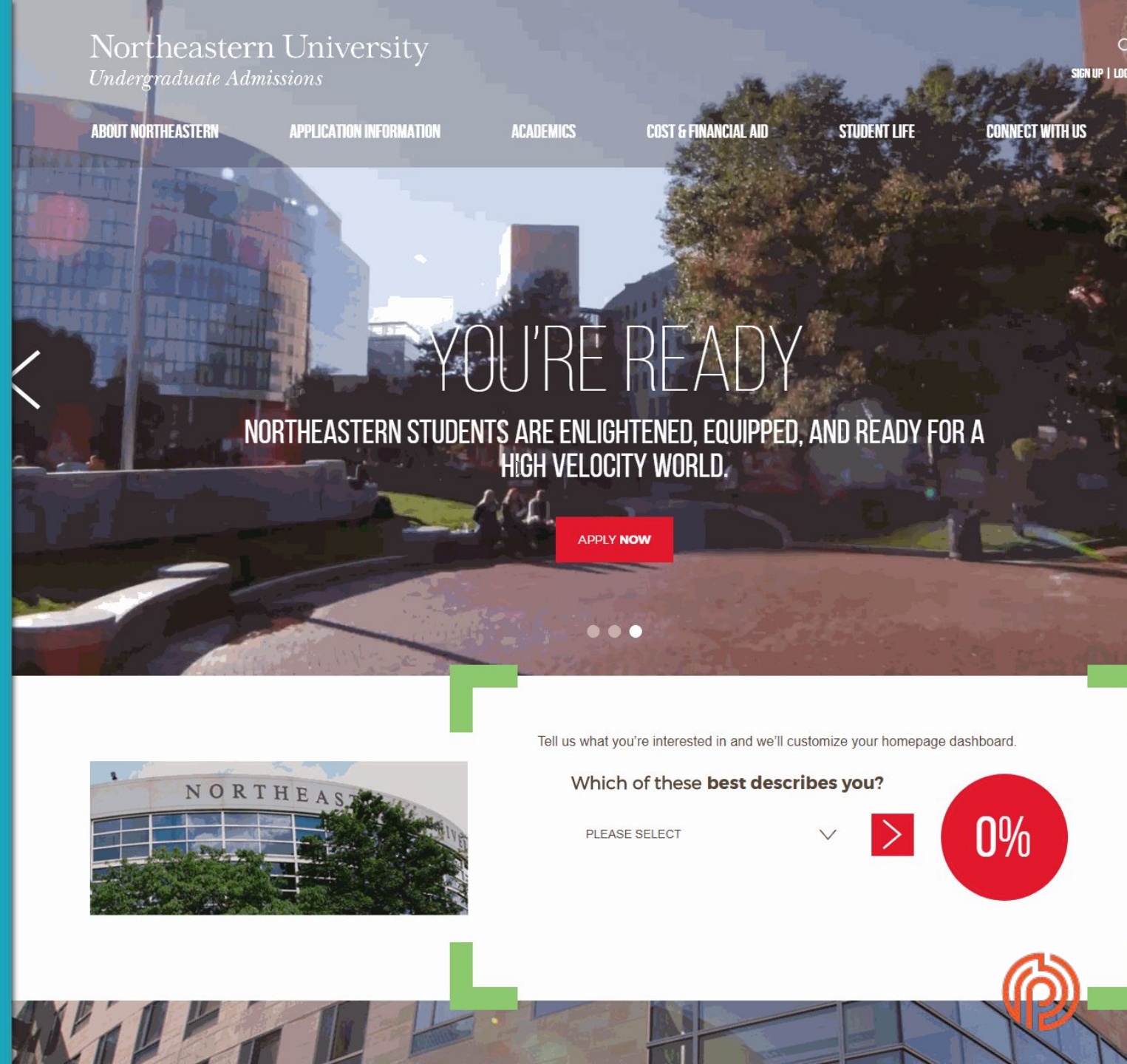
Do the interactive elements keep users engaged and on-site longer?

Selecting Goals



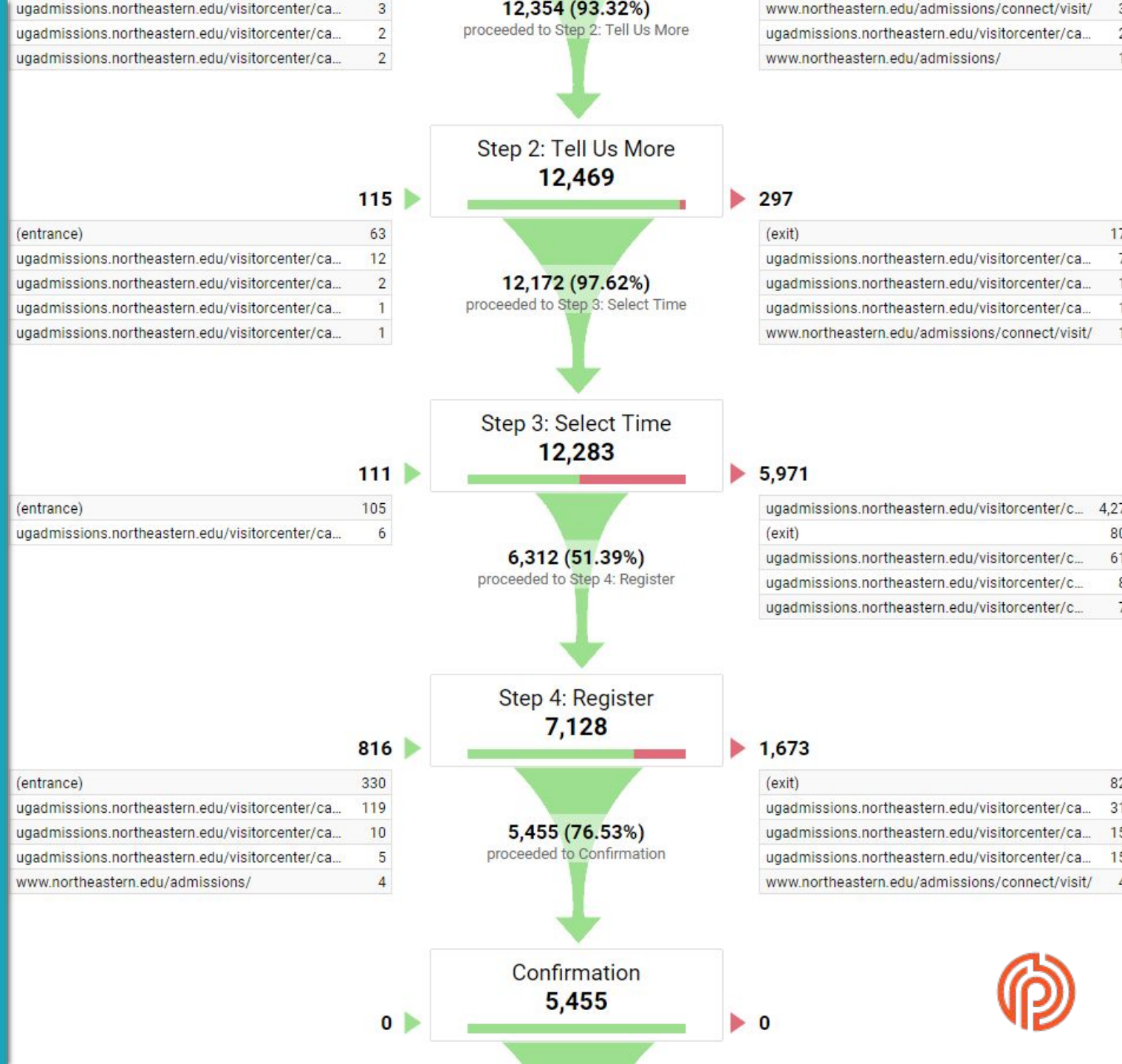
Goal #1: Application Starts

- Does our website lead to more applications?
- Top goal of website
- Goal type: Event



Goal #2: Schedule A Visit

- Does our website encourage prospective students to visit?
- Another “Macro” goal
- Goal type: Destination w/Funnel



Goal #3: Information Requests

- Is our website helping us identify prospects earlier in their journey?
- Doing so increases ability to nurture prospective students, increasing applications.
- Goal type: Event

College of Professional Studies

Analytics

Master's : Boston

OVERVIEW

ADMISSIONS

CURRICULUM

EXPERIENCE

FACULTY

STUDENTS

Apply >

Request Info

The Master of Professional Studies in Analytics helps to meet the demand from employers with a graduate program that provides students with an end-to-end analytics education through a core curriculum with integrated experiential learning opportunities.

Boston

LOCATION

Full-Time
Part-Time

COMMITMENT

2-3 Years

DURATION

Hybrid

PROGRAM FORMAT

You are ready to get started. We are ready to help.

We're here to answer your questions about graduate school. To receive additional information about this program and speak with a member of our team, complete the form below.

seantest_nugn

henritest_nugn

Email Address

Must be valid email.

Get in Touch

By submitting the form, you agree to receive details from Northeastern University about our degree programs and certificates via phone, email and/or text message. You can unsubscribe at any time.



The UTM-to-Hidden Field Solution

Classic GA Cookie (_utmz):

44378021.1488904388.5.3.utmcsr=google|utmccn=(organic)|utmcmd=organic|utmctr=(not%20provided)

Marketo Hidden Fields:

- GA_Source__c_account
- GA_Campaign__c_account
- GA_Medium__c_account
- GA_Term__c_account
- GA_Content__c_account
- LeadSource
- LeadSource_Detail

Salesforce Fields:

- GA_Source__c_account
- GA_Campaign__c_account
- GA_Medium__c_account
- GA_Term__c_account
- GA_Content__c_account
- LeadSource
- LeadSource_Detail

See details: <http://bit.ly/hiddenfields>

Goal #4: Filter By Area of Study

- Does our website facilitate program discovery?
- New design focused on allowing for easy comparison and discovery of similar programs, so that students would find the best fit program for their needs.
- Goal type: Event

Graduate Programs

55 Results

+ Degree Type
Doctorate

- Area of Study



+ Study Options

+ Location

✕ Clear Filters

Choose an Area of Study

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political Science & Security | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pharmaceutical Sciences | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nursing & Healthcare |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psychology & Mental Health | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Health & Public Policy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Science & Mathematics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regulatory Affairs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Law & Criminology | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications & Journalism | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art & Music Administration | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computing & IT |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital Media & Design | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanities & Social Sciences | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education & Learning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Analytics | |

	Bioengineering D Doctorate	Boston	Full-Time	5 Years	Classroom	★
		LOCATION	COMMITMENT	DURATION	TYPE	
	Biology D Doctorate	Boston	Full-Time	5 Years	Classroom	★
		LOCATION	COMMITMENT	DURATION	TYPE	

★ Save and Compare

The average lifetime earnings of an individual with a doctoral degree rings in at **\$3.65 million** (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013).



Custom Events

- Video Plays
- Scrolling
- Expand/Collapse
- Broken Links
- Internal Promotion Clicks
- Social Shares
- Outbound Clicks

The Bioimaging and Signal Processing (BISP) track reflects Northeastern University's outstanding research profile in various aspects of biological and biomedical imaging and image processing and signal processing.

- **Track 2: Biomechanics and Mechanobiology**

The Biomechanics and Mechanobiology track reflects the link of the biological response to applied forces and strains, and leverages the strong faculty research at Northeastern, which is attempting to tie biomechanics to biological responses at multiple scales.

- **Track 3: BioMEMs/BioNANO**

The BioMEMs/BioNANO track reflects Northeastern University's strength as indicated by the NSF Center for High Rate Nanomanufacturing, the NSF/NCI Nanomedicine IGERT training grant and the strong Pharmaceutical Sciences Department.

- **Track 4: Biochemical and Bioenvironmental Engineering**

The Biochemical and Bioenvironmental Engineering track reflects strengths in biochemical engineering and bioenvironmental engineering by active research programs focused in pharmaceutical bioprocessing, biomaterials, tissue engineering, drug delivery, environmental microbiology, biotreatment/bioremediation, and environmental modeling.

- **Track 5: Motor Control**

The Motor Control track presents an interdisciplinary research program with the goal to understand sensorimotor processes underlying the control and coordination of human movements.

- **Track 6: Biocomputing**

The Biocomputing track draws on strengths in computer engineering and computation applied to bioengineering applications.

- **Track 7: Cell and Tissue Engineering**

Cell and tissue engineering is a major strength at Northeastern University with several research labs. These labs are elucidating the quantitative principles that govern cell fate decisions and are developing design strategies to promote the assembly and patterning of multicellular systems into viable, functional tissues.

Did You Know?

The average lifetime earnings of an individual with a doctoral degree is in at **\$3.65 million** (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).



Custom Dimensions

- Personas (self-selected)
- Student Status
- Primary Major Interest
- Secondary Major Interest
- Student ID #



Sessions and Avg. Session Duration by ...

Persona	Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Student	11,975	00:06:35
Parent	1,015	00:06:43
Guidance Counselor	124	00:04:59
Counselor	2	00:01:09

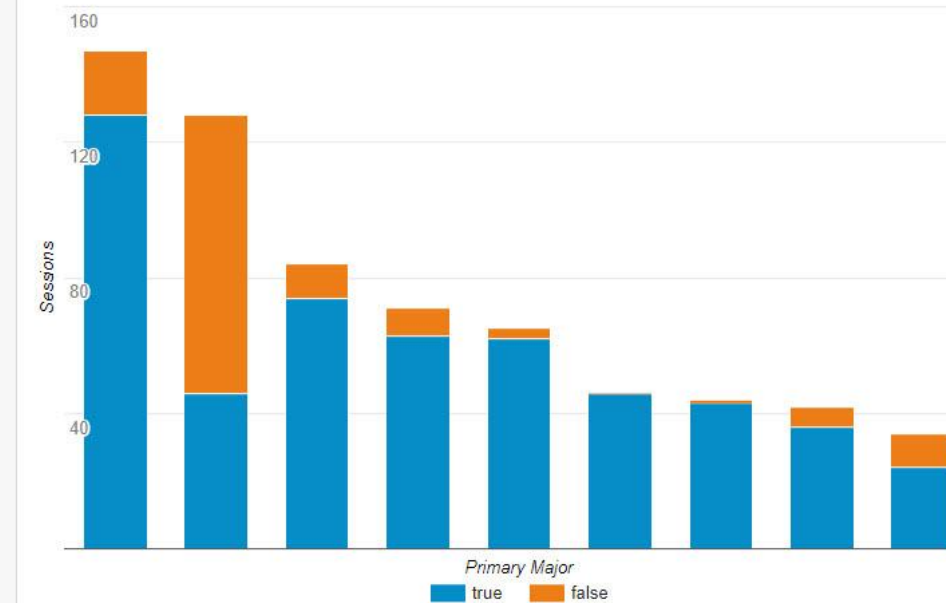
Searches By Students

Search Term	Total Unique Searches	% Search Exits
visit	25	0.00%
tour	16	6.25%
interview	15	46.67%
tuition	10	20.00%
class profile	9	22.22%
tours	8	0.00%
superscore	7	0.00%
essay	6	50.00%
campus tour	5	0.00%
virtual tour	5	0.00%

Searches By Parents

Search Term	Total Unique Searches	% Search Exits
visit	4	0.00%
student profile	3	33.33%
campus visit	2	0.00%
orientation	2	0.00%
parent portal	2	0.00%
virtual tour	2	50.00%
2016 undergraduate		

Sessions by Primary Major and Admitted Status



Top Content Viewed by Students

Page	Pageviews	Page Value
ugadmissions.northeastern.edu/visitorcenter/campusvisitcalendar.asp	11,176	\$20.00
www.northeastern.edu/admissions/	11,174	\$7.00
www.northeastern.edu/admissions/connect/visit/	7,257	\$14.00
www.northeastern.edu/admissions/profile/?login=	5,229	\$8.00
ugadmissions.northeastern.edu/visitorcenter/campusvisitregstep2.asp	3,853	\$20.00

Top Content Viewed By Parents

Page	Pageviews	Page Value
ugadmissions.northeastern.edu/visitorcenter/campusvisitcalendar.asp	1,249	\$17.00
www.northeastern.edu/admissions/	1,100	\$7.00
www.northeastern.edu/admissions/connect/visit/	852	\$10.00
ugadmissions.northeastern.edu/visitorcenter/campusvisitregstep2.asp	381	\$17.00
ugadmissions.northeastern.edu/visitorcenter/campusvisitsuggestion.asp	353	\$17.00



Lessons Learned



Getting Buy-In

The concern:

- I don't know how to use GA
- I like how my data is being captured now
- What's in it for me?
- I'm not comfortable sharing what we're doing with other teams

How we pitched it:

- We'll train you for free
- You can keep your old Google Analytics data - we won't touch it!
- See where your visitors are actually coming from
- It's all about relationships

Challenges along the way

Challenge: “Redesigned the site, didn’t think to tell ya!”

Solution: Create custom alerts for your most important sites to notify you of big traffic swings

Alert Conditions

This applies to	Condition	Value	
Page	Matches regular expression	/graduate/	
Alert me when	Condition	Value	Compared to
Sessions	% decreases by more than	15 %	Same day in the previous week

Save AlertCancel

Challenges along the way

Challenge: “Your script broke my site so I’m breaking your script”

Solution:

- Treat large-scale tag deployments like you would any other major site upgrade
- Communicate!
- Document what went wrong in the past





Custom Alerts

Set up [404](#) and [JavaScript](#) error tracking

Challenges along the way

Challenge: External partners go rogue

Solution: All vendors need to go through us to add tags

Closing Thoughts



5 Things You Need to Do ASAP

1. Build a network of key stakeholders
2. Identify your gaps and bad data
3. Define a measurement strategy
4. Commit to the effort for the long-run
5. Implement bot filtering, goals, and other basic settings



Presentation and Free Resources:

<http://bit.ly/eduweb17>

- Presentation Slides
- Free Google Analytics Data Quality Assessment
 - Measurement Planning Worksheet
 - Google Analytics Dashboard Template

A Newton's cradle with five silver spheres hanging from thin wires against a teal background. The word "Questions?" is written in white across the center of the image.

Questions?

The background is a teal-tinted photograph of a workspace. It features a laptop with a visible keyboard, a notebook with a blank page, and a pen resting on the notebook. The text 'Thank You!' is centered over the image in a white, sans-serif font.

Thank You!