

# Campaign tracking manual

Version: 20-07-2023

You can find the latest version at: <https://www.ru.nl/en/staff/services/services-and-facilities/communication-and-promotion/communication-channels/website/web-statistics>

## Table of Contents

- 1. Why measure campaigns? ..... 2
- 2. How does it work? ..... 2
- 3. Creating the parameter ..... 7
- 4. Adding the parameter to a link ..... 10
- 5. Examples..... 11
- 6. When not to use campaign tracking?..... 12
- 7. Retrieving the landing page..... 12
- 8. Automate newsletter measurement in Interspire ..... 13
- 9. Measuring newsletters using ClickDimensions (CRM) ..... 14
- 10. Measuring social media campaigns through Obi4wan ..... 15

## 1. Why measure campaigns?

Our web statistics tool (Google Analytics) by default records from what source and medium a visitor originates, when he visits one of our websites. There are three default medium categories: 'organic' (through a search engine), 'referral' (through a link on another website), and 'direct / none' (other / unknown). Sometimes, however, it is useful or necessary to create additional categories to make a further distinction.

For example, when you have a paid banner as well as a free text link on external website X, Google Analytics cannot distinguish between the two. Regardless of whether the visitor clicked on the text link or banner, he is placed in the category 'from external site X'. This is inconvenient when you want to know if your paid banner was worth the cost.

Example 2: When you send a digital mailing with a link to our website in it, Google Analytics cannot figure out that the visitor came from a mailing. Because he did not come from another website and neither came from a search engine, the visit is placed in the third group, 'from other sources' (direct / none). You therefore do not know how successful your mailing was.

## 2. How does it work?

To be able to analyze whether your campaigns have led to an increase in website visits and / or conversions, you can add a so-called parameter (extra piece of code) to links that point to our website. This parameter contains three variables, that provide details about the medium, source and type of campaign used, that are passed to Google Analytics.

De parameter looks like this:

```
?utm_source=source-name&utm_medium=medium-name&utm_campaign=campaign-name
```

You add this parameter to the end of the URL you would normally link to. The highlighted parts are variable and are different in each case. You define them yourself, based on the instructions in chapter 3.

Instead of linking to <https://www.ru.nl>, for example, you to link [https://www.ru.nl?utm\\_source=nu-banner&utm\\_medium=display&utm\\_campaign=staff-recruitment](https://www.ru.nl?utm_source=nu-banner&utm_medium=display&utm_campaign=staff-recruitment)

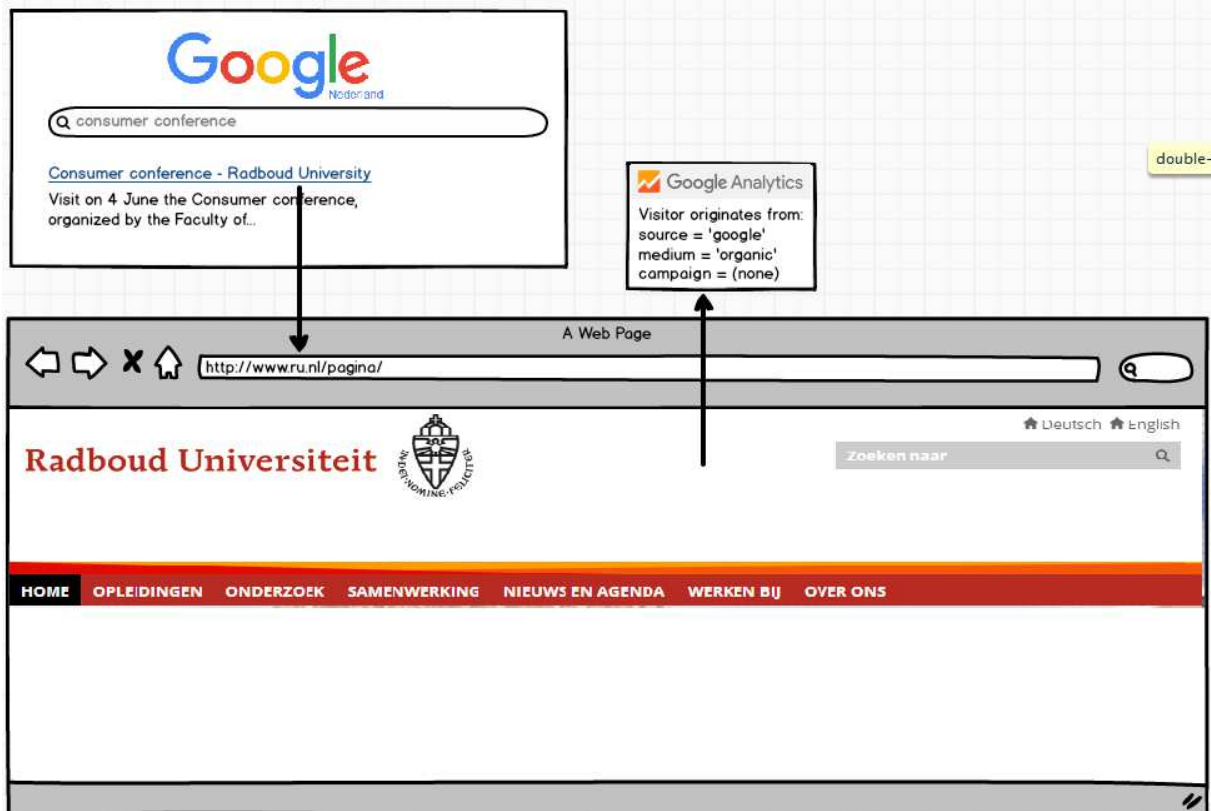
This has no influence on the page that is being opened. The browser uses only the normal part of the url. However, as soon als the url is opened in the browser, Google Analytics recognizes that addition and tags the visitor with an additional label, that he will keep during his visit.

Normally, Google Analytics will tag a visitor as originating from one of its 3 default visitor sources: 'originating from a search engine' (organic), 'originating from a link on another site' (referral), of 'direct visit or from other source' (none). If you do not use a parameter, the visitor will end up in one of those default categories.

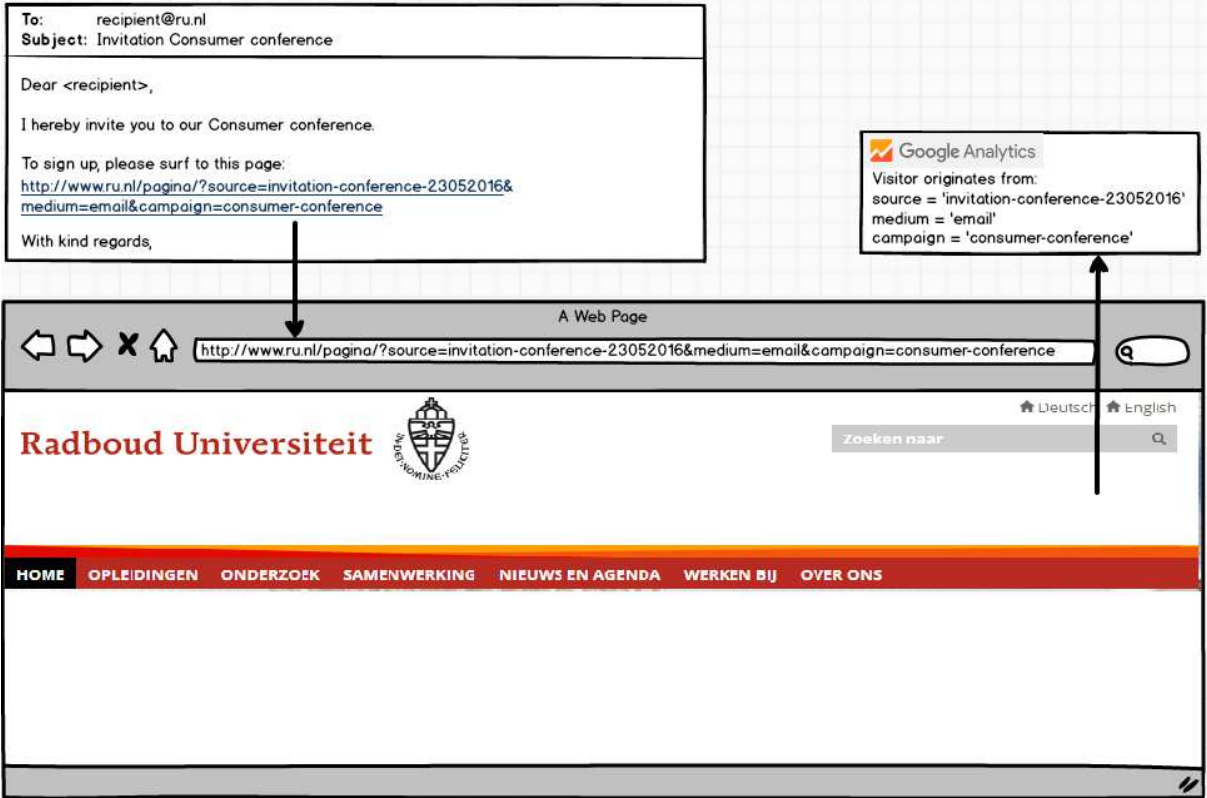
By adding a parameter, Google Analytics will create an additional visitor source, based on the medium name that is in the parameter (like 'banner', 'email', etc.). This makes it very easy to separate these visitors from the others.

So it is not necessary to set anything up in Google Analytics: Google Analytics merely reads the parameter in the url and automatically creates new categories in its reports, based on the category names in the parameter. (Therefore it is extremely important to be consistent in your naming of the variables!)

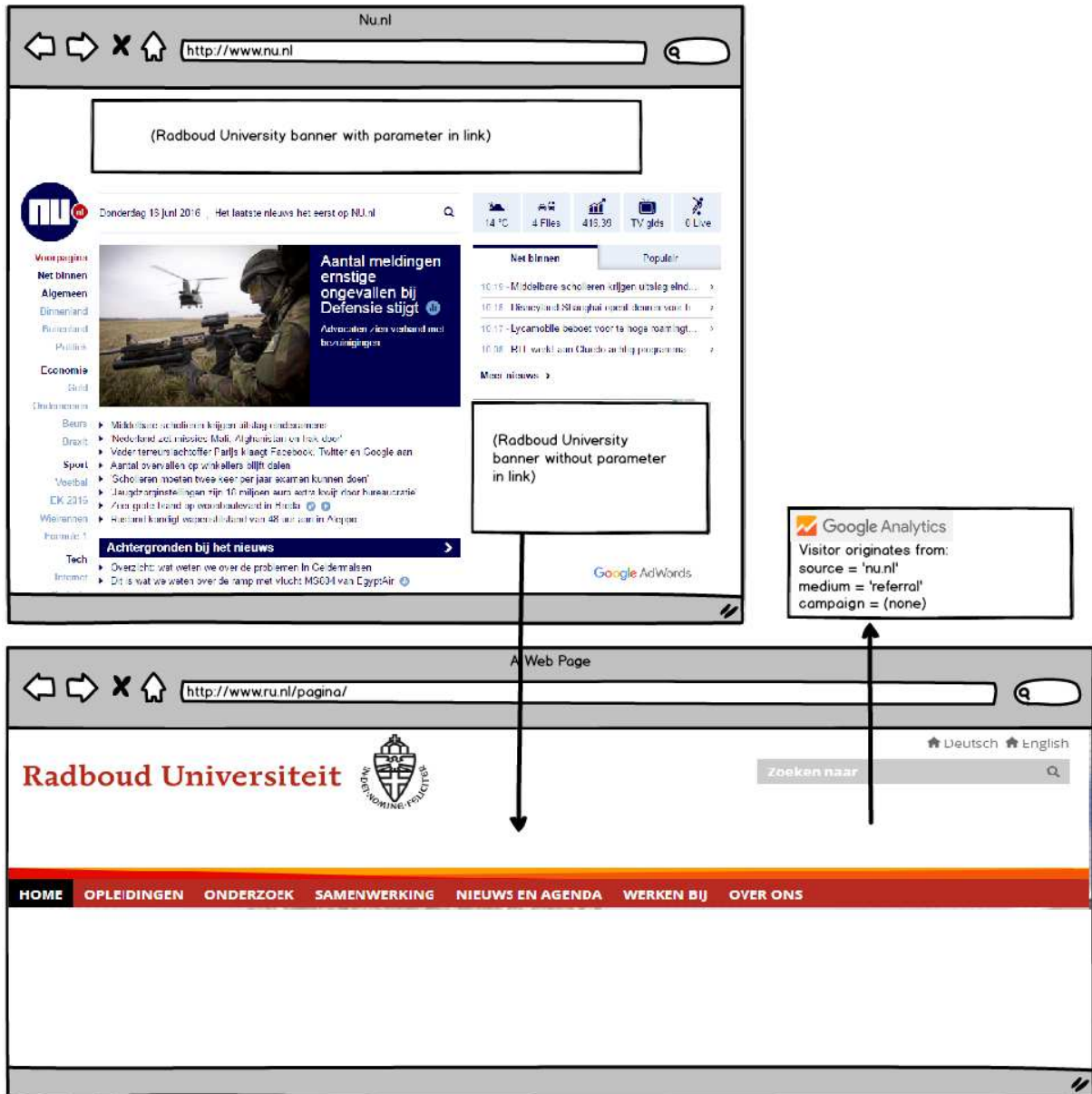
**Example 1: visitor visits page through link without parameter in search results. Google Analytics tags this visitor as 'originating from search engine' (organic)**



Example 2: visitor visits page through link with parameter in email. Google Analytics tags this visitor as 'originating from email' (email)



**Example 3: visitor visits page through link without parameter behind a banner. Google Analytics tags this visitor as 'originating from other site' (referral)**



**Example 4: visitor visits page through link with parameter behind a banner. Google Analytics tags this visitor as 'originating from display banner' (display)**

The image shows two browser screenshots illustrating a visitor's path from a banner to a specific page. The top screenshot shows a news page on 'Nu.nl' with a banner labeled '(Radboud University banner with parameter in link)'. A vertical arrow points from this banner to the bottom screenshot, which shows the destination page on 'Radboud Universiteit' with a URL containing tracking parameters: 'http://www.ru.nl/pagina/?source=nu-ad-conference&medium=banner&campaign=consumer-conference'. A horizontal arrow points from this URL to a Google Analytics tag box on the right, which contains the following text: 'Google Analytics Visitor originates from: source = 'nu-ad-conference' medium = 'banner' campaign = 'consumer-conference''.

In the Google Analytics reports you will see this as follows:

Medium ?		Acquisition		
		Sessions ? ↓	% New Sessions ?	New Users ?
		85,180 % of Total: 100.00% (85,180)	37.30% Site Avg: 37.30% (0.00%)	31,768 % of Total: 100.00% (31,768)
1	1. organic	63,175 (74.17%)	35.64%	22,514 (70.87%)
	2. (none)	16,783 (19.70%)	46.03%	7,725 (24.32%)
	3. referral	4,854 (5.70%)	28.95%	1,405 (4.42%)
2	4. email	194 (0.23%)	41.24%	80 (0.25%)
	5. cpc	146 (0.17%)	29.45%	43 (0.14%)
	6. 300x250	11 (0.01%)	0.00%	0 (0.00%)
	7. banner	7 (0.01%)	0.00%	0 (0.00%)
	8. social	7 (0.01%)	14.29%	1 (0.00%)

1: Default categories in Google Analytics

2: Categories added manually by using the parameter in links to the site

The same goes for the source and campaign: in these reports additional categories are also created, depending on what you put into the parameter. This way, you can distinguish your visitors from other visitors on these levels as well.

### 3. Creating the parameter

The parameter, i.e. the so-called *campaign code* to be added to links to our website, is as follows:

?utm\_source=**name-source**&utm\_medium=**name-medium**&utm\_campaign=**name-campaign**

The highlighted parts are variable and vary per campaign. You choose the names yourself, using the instructions below.

**Campaign:** for which purpose is the communication? Or: what exactly are you promoting with this communication?

A campaign can be one-time or ongoing. Within a campaign, you can employ multiple media and sources, for example 3 mailings and 2 banners for recruiting new employees, or one mailing and a social media ad for getting registrations for an open day. By using the same campaign name for all these types of communication, you can later easily group everything you did for this purpose, in one report. Therefore *the campaign name should never contain a reference to the source or medium that was used.*

For example:

- 'alumni-day-2014'
- 'open-day-09-2014'
- 'employee-recruitment'

- 'promotion-english-masters'
- 'promotion-bachelor-biology'

Incorrect:

- 'newsletter'
- 'timeshighereducation-portal'

Do not use spaces in the campaign name. Campaign names are case sensitive.

If multiple people work on a campaign, and one manages for example the AdWords campaign, another does the bannering, and a third person maintains the social media page, pick one campaign name so everyone uses the same one. If you don't, it won't be easy to add up the results in Google Analytics.

**Medium:** the type of medium / the channel through which this communication was spread.

Choose from the following options:

- 'email' (for everything that is sent through a mailing)
- 'cpc' (for paid cost-per-click advertising like AdWords, YouTube, LinkedIn and Facebook)
- 'display' (for display ads, like banners and other cpm ads)
- 'paid-link' (for a normal link on an external site that we paid for)
- 'social' (for posts that are not paid for on social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter)
- 'referral' (for a normal link on an external site that we did not pay for. Note: only tag this kind of link with a UTM code if you want to specifically attribute visits through these links to a campaign.)
- 'offline' (for links in offline ads, QR-codes, etc.)
- 'document' (for links in digital documents, like pdf files)
- 'tool' (for links communicated through systems, like a chat tool or webcare tool)

Always formulate the 'medium' variable exactly as shown in the list (they are also case sensitive). If there is no suitable option from the list for your campaign, contact Online Strategy & Infrastructure ([onlinemarketing@ru.nl](mailto:onlinemarketing@ru.nl)) for a new term.

If you do not use the above default categories, or when you use a different spelling, you are disturbing the reports.

For example, if one link uses the word 'email', another 'e-mail' and yet another 'Email', then Google Analytics will treat this as a separate types of media and therefore do not group them in the same report:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium ?	Acquisition
		Sessions ? ↓
		33,979 % of Total: 0.84% (4,032,680)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. cpc	25,751 (75.79%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. email	5,185 (15.26%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. banner	1,044 (3.07%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. e-mail	1,023 (3.01%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. social	543 (1.60%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. referral	295 (0.87%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. mailing	33 (0.10%)

In the above example, three different names for the variable 'medium' were used when sending out mailings, making it impossible to analyze the results as a whole.

**Source:** the specific spot where this type of campaign communication was placed in/on, and if necessary, specify the type of communication.

In the source name, you can for example specify which mail it was, or on what site the paid link was placed, and in which form.

For example:

- 'invitation-mail-registration-alumni-day"
- 'reminder-mail-registration-alumni-day"
- 'evaluation-mail-alumni-day"
- 'radboud-weekly-overview-week-14'
- 'newsletter-sept2017'
- 'radboud-recharge'
- 'facebook'
- 'facebook-post-05042022'
- 'academic-transfer-banner'
- 'tweet-invitation-alumniday"

Do not use spaces in the source name.

Keep in mind that you are not the only employee / department measuring campaigns in our Google Analytics account; several campaigns from the Radboud University may be measured using the same account. So make sure that you use clear and distinctive names, so others can determine what it was when they analyze the statistics. Also, you must be able to understand the description yourself, if you see it a year or so afterwards.

As mentioned earlier, the campaign name is not related to the source. Alternatively, the source is not related to the campaign name. For example, you can include two links in one mailing that are intended for different campaigns. In your mailing (with source name 'newsletter-sept2017') you link eg. to both the vacancy page (campaign 'recruitment') and to the open day sign up page (campaign 'openday2017'). That means both links get the same source name and medium name, but a different campaign name.

For example:

- **Link 1:** <https://www.ru.nl/vacancies--> source=newsletter-sept2017, medium=email, campaign=recruitment>
- **Link 2:** <https://www.ru.nl/open-day/signup --> source=newsletter-sept2017, medium=email, campaign=openday2017>

**Content:** This is an optional fourth parameter, that you can use to distinguish between different types of communication, such as different banners.

Use this parameter when you use more than one link with the same source and medium, for the same campaign, and you want to find out which link variant performs best.

*Example 1:*

You show different variants of advertisements via Facebook. You want to know which variant performs best. For each advertisement you create a UTM code with a 'content' parameter that is different per advertisement:

- Advertisement X:  
[https://www.ru.nl?utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=ru-congres&utm\\_content=ad-x](https://www.ru.nl?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=ru-congres&utm_content=ad-x)
- Advertisement Y:  
[https://www.ru.nl?utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=ru-congres&utm\\_content=ad-y](https://www.ru.nl?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=ru-congres&utm_content=ad-y)

*Example 2:*

You send an email containing both a text link and a banner with a link to the same page. To be able to measure whether a visitor clicked on the text link or the banner to arrive at the web page, you add the variable 'utm\_content' to the links, with different values:

- Text link: [https://www.ru.nl?utm\\_source=invitation mail-congres&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=ru-congres&utm\\_content=text link](https://www.ru.nl?utm_source=invitation mail-congres&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ru-congres&utm_content=text link)
- Banner link: [https://www.ru.nl?utm\\_source=invitationsmail-congres&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=ru-congres&utm\\_content=banner](https://www.ru.nl?utm_source=invitationsmail-congres&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ru-congres&utm_content=banner)

## 4. Adding the parameter to a link

The previous chapter described how to choose the three variables in the parameter. To use the parameter, you paste it behind the URL of the page you normally would to link to via your banner, email, etc.

Suppose you want to link in your e-mail to the URL <https://www.ru.nl/english/education/open-day/register/>.

Your parameter is:

?utm\_source=first-reminder&utm\_medium=email&utm\_campaign=openday2015

The new, measurable link is created by pasting them both together:

[https://www.ru.nl/english/education/open-day/register/?utm\\_source=first-reminder&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=openday2015](https://www.ru.nl/english/education/open-day/register/?utm_source=first-reminder&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=openday2015)

**Don't use a friendly URL**, but the actual URL of the page.

If it is a **URL that you communicate offline**, then do use a friendly URL. For the destination URL of the friendly URL, use the URL including the parameters.

For example:

Create a friendly url called [www.ru.nl/volkskrant](http://www.ru.nl/volkskrant) and redirect it to [www.ru.nl/about-us/work-at-radboud/?utm\\_source=volkskrant-12may2015&utm\\_medium=offline&utm\\_campaign=employee-recruitment](http://www.ru.nl/about-us/work-at-radboud/?utm_source=volkskrant-12may2015&utm_medium=offline&utm_campaign=employee-recruitment)

**Is there already a question mark in the URL?** Then you'll have to slightly alter the parameter.

A question mark is a character used in URL's for separation, indicating that the 'real' URL ends, and a supplement follows that the website, a statistics package, etc., can use to do something with. A question mark may therefore occur in a URL only once. You can separate the several variables that you add to a URL by using an ampersand.

Suppose that the URL you want to link to is the following: <http://www.ru.nl/english/?id=5439>

If you would add a campaign tracking parameter behind this URL, there would be two question marks in the URL, which is not allowed.

The solution is to replace the question mark in the campaign tracking parameter by an ampersand:

[https://www.ru.nl/english/?id=5439&utm\\_source=first-reminder&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=openday2015](https://www.ru.nl/english/?id=5439&utm_source=first-reminder&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=openday2015)

**Too complicated?** For your convenience, we have created an Excel file that automatically composes the URL for you. You can download it on the page containing the Google Analytics tutorials:

<https://www.ru.nl/en/staff/services/services-and-facilities/communication-and-promotion/communication-channels/website/web-statistics>

## 5. Examples

To illustrate, you can find some examples below of how such a measurable link could look like.

1. A banner of *600x200 px*, which is placed on Nu.nl to recruit new master students, that links to the page <http://www.ru.nl/english/education/master/>. The URL behind the banner could become:  
*[https://www.ru.nl/opleidingen/master?utm\\_source=nu&utm\\_medium=display&utm\\_campaign=werving-masterstudenten&utm\\_content=topbanner-600x200](https://www.ru.nl/opleidingen/master?utm_source=nu&utm_medium=display&utm_campaign=werving-masterstudenten&utm_content=topbanner-600x200)*
2. A banner of *200x300 px*, which is placed on Nu.nl to recruit new master students, which refers to the page <http://www.ru.nl/english/education/master/>. The URL behind the banner could become:  
*[https://www.ru.nl/opleidingen/master?utm\\_source=nu&utm\\_medium=display&utm\\_campaign=werving-masterstudenten&utm\\_content=sidebanner-200x300](https://www.ru.nl/opleidingen/master?utm_source=nu&utm_medium=display&utm_campaign=werving-masterstudenten&utm_content=sidebanner-200x300)*
3. A Facebook event that contains a link to the registration page for the Open Day in May 2022, which can be found on <http://www.ru.nl/openday/registration>. The link in the event description could become:

[https://www.ru.nl/openday/registration?utm\\_source=facebook-event-open-day&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=open-day-may-2022](https://www.ru.nl/openday/registration?utm_source=facebook-event-open-day&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=open-day-may-2022)

4. An internal mailing to employees, containing a *request* for filling out a survey on working conditions, with a link to the survey that can be found on <https://portal.ru.nl/survey>. The link in the mailing could become:

[https://portal.nu.nl/survey?utm\\_source=survey-invitation&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=working-conditions-survey](https://portal.nu.nl/survey?utm_source=survey-invitation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=working-conditions-survey)

5. An internal mailing to employees, containing a *reminder* for completing the survey on working conditions, with a link to the survey that can be found on <https://portal.ru.nl/survey>. The link in the mailing could become:

[https://portal.nu.nl/survey?utm\\_source=survey-reminder&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=working-conditions-survey](https://portal.nu.nl/survey?utm_source=survey-reminder&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=working-conditions-survey)

## 6. When not to use campaign tracking?

Campaign tracking parameters should not be used for links on pages that are part of the RU.nl website, that are being measured with the same Google Analytics account.

For example, you should not add a parameter to a banner that is placed on the homepage of Ru.nl, that links to the registration page for the open day on [www.ru.nl/orientation/open-day/](http://www.ru.nl/orientation/open-day/).

Use the parameter only when you measure visit from external websites and sources, or a RU website that uses its own Google Analytics account.

If you use the parameter on your own site, you'll overwrite the original source of your visitor, thereby disrupting your data.

## 7. Retrieving the landing page

It is not necessary to specify the page your link refers to in the campaign code. Google Analytics already knows this, because the url the visitor visits, precedes the campaign code.

Suppose you insert two links into your mailing, each referring to another page. They have the same goal, so they will have the same source name, medium name and campaign name. However, Google Analytics does not only remember the source data of the visit, but also the page on which the visitor entered the site (and the pages he visits thereafter). This information is thus available in the statistics.

When you look at your campaign results, you can find the linked url for example by adding a secondary dimension to your table, showing the landing page:

Primary Dimension: Source / Medium <span>Other</span>		Secondary dimension: Landing Page		Sort type: Default	
	Source / Medium	Landing Page		Acquisition	
				Sessions	
				1,480	% of Total: 1.50% (98,795)
1.	RadboudWeekbericht-Week37 / email	/		398 (26.89%)	
2.	RadboudWeekbericht-Week37 / email	/personen/		52 (3.51%)	
3.	RadboudWeekbericht-Week37 / email	/vm_syllabus_plus/rooster/		19 (1.28%)	
4.	RadboudWeekbericht-Week37 / email	/nieuws-agenda/nieuws/vm/2017/september/tien-nieuwe-leden-academia-europa/		10 (0.68%)	

## 8. Automate newsletter measurement in Interspire

If you want to measure your newsletters and you send them via Interspire (the former Sendbox), it is not always necessary to manually add parameters to all your links in the newsletter. Interspire can automate adding the parameter to links in the mailing.

This does mean that *all* links in the mailing will be supplemented with the campaign tracking parameter. If you do not want that, then you need to adapt the links in question manually in the content of the mail.

To automatically provide all the links with a campaign parameter, follow these steps:

- Prepare your mailing in Interspire as usual.
- When sending the finished mailing, select in step 2 'advanced settings'.
- Under "track link clicked in this Email", select the following options:
  - o "Yes, track all links in this email campaign "
  - o "Yes, my track campaign using Google Analytics"
- The variable 'medium' is automatically filled in for you behind the scenes (as 'email'). You must fill out the campaign name and source yourself.

**Advanced Settings (Optional)**

Send Your Email as Multipart?  Yes, send the email as multipart

Track Open Rates for HTML Emails?  Yes, track opening of HTML emails

Track Links Clicked in this Email?  Yes, track all links in this email campaign

Yes, track my campaign using Google Analytics

\* Use this Campaign Name:

\* Use this Source Name:

## 9. Measuring newsletters using ClickDimensions (CRM)

Like Sendbox, ClickDimensions (the e-mail tool within the CRM system) offers the option to add campaign parameters automatically to all links in your email. Unfortunately ClickDimensions is more limited: you can only change the campaign name, not the source name. As source name, the name 'ClickDimensions' is filled out by the program. This is obviously not desirable, because it says nothing about what kind of email you sent. Therefore, if you use ClickDimensions, you will have to manually tag the links in your email.

When you add a link to your e-mail, do not just enter the landing page URL into the appropriate field, but also place the campaign parameter behind it:

Insert a link

WEBSITE URL EMAIL ANCHOR FILE UNSUBSCRIBE VIEW IN BROWSER WEB CONTENT

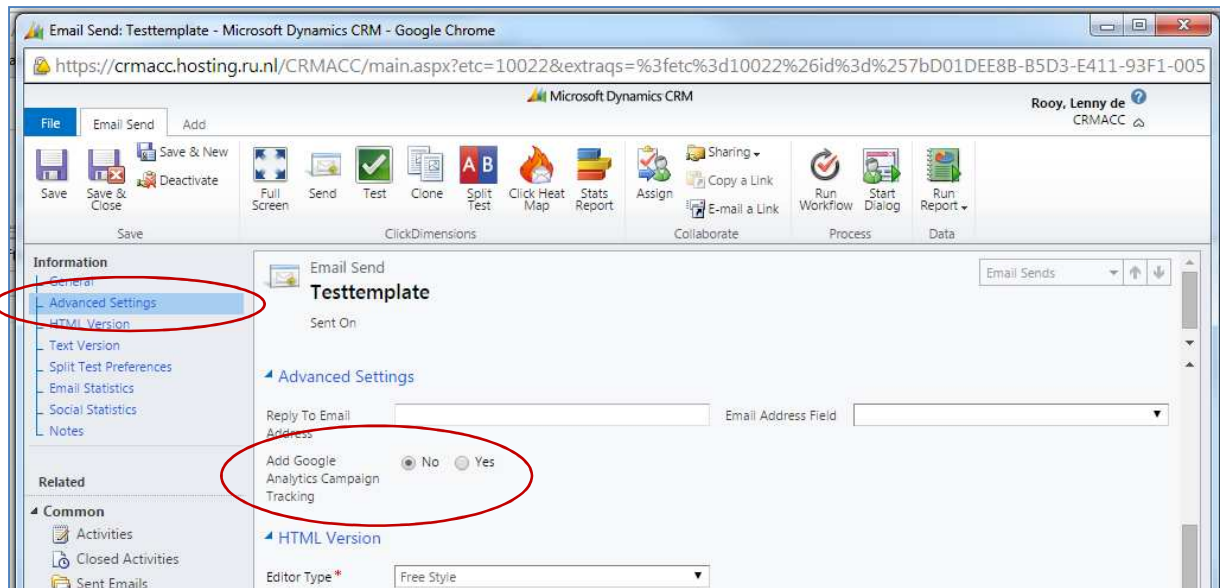
Enter Website's URL:

Link Text:

Open Link In New Window

Insert Link

Make sure that the automatic measurement of links is turned off, so that your links are not being overwritten. This setting can be found under Advanced Settings:



## 10. Measuring social media campaigns through Obi4wan

The social media tool Obi4wan includes an option to add your campaign parameters to your social media messages in an easy way.

If you are about to post a message and want to add a measurable link, click in the message window on the link "UTM".



Then, a window appears with fields where you can enter the URL of your link and the three variables:

The screenshot shows a form titled "Voeg een url met UTM codering toe" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The form contains six input fields, each with a checkbox to its left:

- URL van website \*:
- Campagne bron \*:
- Campagne medium \*:
- Campagne woord:
- Campagne inhoud:
- Campagne naam \*:

At the bottom right, there are two buttons: "Link toevoegen" (highlighted in blue) and "Annuleren" (greyed out).

In the field 'URL of website', enter the URL of the page in which you want to link to (no friendly URL).

Enter the source, medium and campaign name in the fields 'campaign source', 'campaign medium' and 'campaign Name'.

The other fields are optional and can be left empty.

Note that, given the nature of the message, the medium should *always* be 'social'. Therefore, this field is pre-filled.

For example:

The screenshot shows the same form as above, but with example data entered:

- URL van website \*:
- Campagne bron \*:
- Campagne medium \*:
- Campagne woord:
- Campagne inhoud:
- Campagne naam \*:

The "Link toevoegen" button is now highlighted in blue, and the "Annuleren" button is greyed out.

Once you click on 'add link', the link with test code is automatically being generated for you:

**Nieuw bericht**

Kies account

`http://www.ru.nl/voorbeeld/?utm_source=facebook-uitnodiging-evenement&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=opendag2015`

Datum kiezen

[UTM](#) [Shorten URL](#) [Afbeelding](#)

**Bericht verzenden** Preview

Of course it is also possible to manually enter a URL with campaign parameters into your message.