

# QUICK (AND EASY) GUIDE TO UTM PARAMETERS

A Step-By-Step Approach to  
Tracking Your Shared Content



**Have you heard the term UTM and wanted to try them out, but weren't quite sure where to begin? Are you looking for an easy way to track where your traffic and prospects are coming from? If so, this quick guide is for you.**

The Quick (and Easy) Guide to UTM Parameters is designed to help small marketing teams who might not have access to a web developer or 3rd-party attribution tools. UTM parameters can be used by everyone (even if you are a busy team of one) to help track where your leads and visitors are coming from. Whether you are a tech genius or a tech newbie, embrace UTM parameters as a very powerful, free and easy way to track the source of your traffic from shared content.



# Why Use UTM Parameters?

UTM parameters are a **free and easy** way to get basic attribution information on the content you share or the places you advertise.



# What Exactly are UTM Parameters?

UTM parameters are specific tracking information appended to a single URL that allow you to track specific information related to where that URL is clicked. The parameters can be tracked using an analytics platform, such as Google Analytics, and/or captured using your web forms.

*Example of a URL that includes UTM Parameters:*

`www.condurrio.com/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_content=blog`



# UTM Parameter Architecture

www.condurrio.com/?utm\_medium=social&utm\_source=facebook&utm\_content=blog

URL Address

'?' is used to append the parameters to the URL

'=' goes between each parameter name and value

Multiple parameters can be joined with a '&'

Parameter name

Value

This is what gets captured by your analytics platform or form



# What are Common UTM Parameters?

Although you can create any parameter you want, the most common UTM parameters are:

- **utm\_source:** Identify the advertiser, site, publication, etc. that is sending traffic to your property, for example: google, newsletter4, billboard.
- **utm\_medium:** The advertising or marketing medium, for example: cpc, banner, email newsletter.
- **utm\_campaign:** The individual campaign name, slogan, promo code, etc. for a product.
- **utm\_term:** Identify paid search keywords. If you're manually tagging paid keyword campaigns, you should also use utm\_term to specify the keyword.
- **utm\_content:** Used to differentiate similar content, or links within the same ad. For example, if you have two call-to-action links within the same email message, you can use utm\_content and set different values for each so you can tell which version is more effective.

Source: Google Analytics, <https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033863#parameters>



# How Do You Create UTM Parameters?

The easiest way to create your own URLs with parameters is to use one of the free URL builders available:

- Google <https://ga-dev-tools.appspot.com/campaign-url-builder/>
- Raven Tools <https://raventools.com/marketing-reports/google-analytics/url-builder/>



Many marketing automation platforms, such as Marketo or Hubspot, have built in URL builders.



Once you understand the structure of a URL containing UTM parameters, you can easily create them manually.

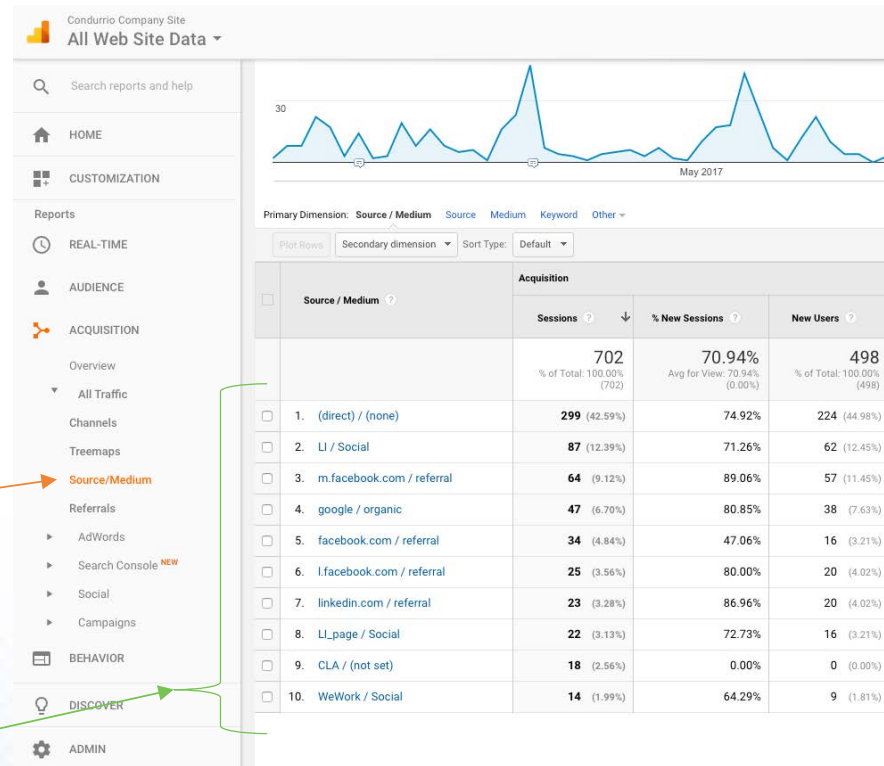


# How Do You Track UTM Parameters?

The real power of UTM parameters comes in the tracking information that they pass into your analytics platform. Since most of us rely on Google Analytics, this explores how URLs with UTM parameters are tracked there.

On the left side navigation, got to “Acquisition > All Traffic > Source/Medium”

You can review analytics data based on which link brought a person to your website.



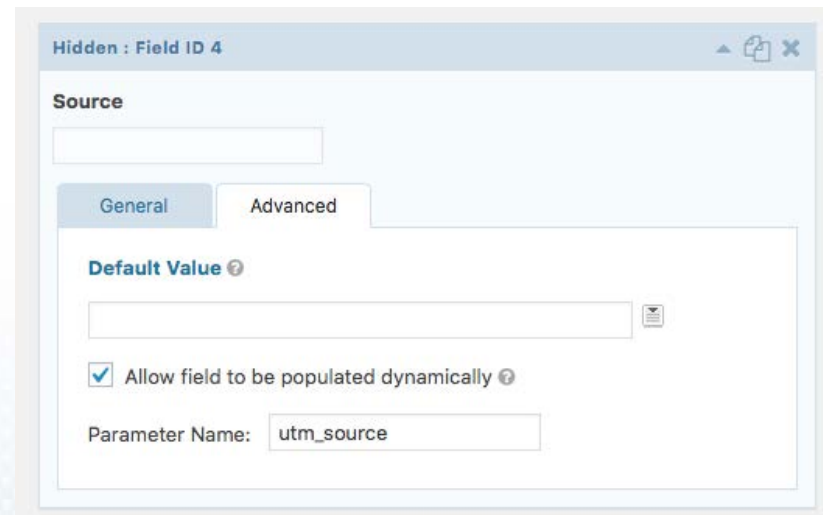


# How Do You Capture UTM Parameters?

In addition to using URL parameters to assess the traffic from your various sources and campaigns, you can often capture that data using hidden fields on forms. By capturing them during the form fill process, you can track where your leads are coming from.

When someone fills out the form on a page that includes has those UTM parameters in the URL, they will be included in the form fill and available in your database. This is very useful for tracking first touch attribution.

*The ability to capture data using hidden fields depends on how your forms are built. With the myriad of form options, it's impossible to give step-by-step directions for each. I have experience with both Gravity Forms and Marketo forms which is likely to translate to the type of forms you use:*



The screenshot shows a configuration window for a hidden field. The title bar reads "Hidden : Field ID 4". Below the title bar, there is a "Source" label and an empty text input field. Below that, there are two tabs: "General" (selected) and "Advanced". Under the "General" tab, there is a "Default Value" label with a question mark icon, followed by an empty text input field and a small icon. Below that, there is a checked checkbox labeled "Allow field to be populated dynamically" with a question mark icon. At the bottom, there is a "Parameter Name:" label followed by a text input field containing the value "utm\_source".



# Limits To Capturing UTM Data With Forms

One limitation of using hidden fields to capture UTM values is that the UTM parameters are only available on that specific page and don't remain with the visitor as they navigate to other pages on your website.

For example, if you direct someone to your home page using a UTM parameter, such as [www.mysite.com/?utm\\_source=Facebook](http://www.mysite.com/?utm_source=Facebook) the UTM parameters would be available for a form on that page. However, if that visitor clicks to your Contact page and fills out a form on that page, no UTM parameters will be captured on that form.



Tracking attribution is the first step to understanding the results of your individual marketing efforts. Adding UTM parameters to all the links you share is a quick, easy and FREE way to begin to track attribution.

Need additional help adding UTM parameters to your links? Condurrio can help with that and many other digital marketing questions.

### **Author the author**

Carey Picklesimer, owner and primary consultant with Condurrio, is a Marketo Certified Expert with nearly 20 years of experience blending strategy with technology.

Learn more at [condurrio.com](http://condurrio.com)

