UTM Parameters
Background and Definition

• UTM stands for Urchin Traffic Monitor/Module
• Urchin Software Corp was acquired by Google in 2005 and from there, Google Analytics was born in 2006
• The UTM Parameters allow you to track your external campaigns – they enable you to see which campaign(s) drives traffic to your site and how the campaign(s) performs
Structure and Examples

• Structure: Your website URL, immediately followed by a question mark (?) and the UTM Parameters.
• Examples:
  ▪ http://www.depaul.edu/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=FallActivities16
  ▪ http://www.depaul.edu?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=FallActivities16&utm_content=top+email+banner+link
The Parameters

- There are 5 parameters making up a complete UTM Parameter Set:
  - `utm_medium`, which is the Campaign Medium
  - `utm_source`, which is the Campaign Source
  - `utm_campaign`, which is the Campaign Name
  - `utm_term`, which is the Campaign Term*
  - `utm_content`, which is the Campaign Content*

* = optional
Campaign Medium

• This is a *required* parameter
• `utm_medium` helps identify *a medium*, such as email, social, or cost-per-click
• Examples:
  - `utm_medium=email`
  - `utm_medium=organic`
  - `utm_medium=social`
  - `utm_medium=cpc`
Campaign Source

• This is a *required* parameter

• **utm_source** helps identify *where your traffic/campaign is coming from* e.g. the name of search engine, social network, newsletter name, or other sources. A source is more specific than and is a subset of a medium. For example, for medium=social, the sources could be Facebook, Twitter, etc.

• Examples:
  - utm_source=newsletter
  - utm_source=twitter
  - utm_source=facebook
Campaign Name

• This is a *required* parameter
• **utm_campaign** helps identify a *specific/unique campaign*. Give your campaign a unique name.

• Examples:
  - utm_campaign=FallVisit2016
  - utm_campaign=Newsletter16-17
  - utm_campaign=25-social-media-strategies

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Campaign Term

• This is an *optional* parameter
• **utm_term** helps identify *keywords for your campaign used in paid search*. This will show up as the “keyword” dimension in Google Analytics.
• If your Google Analytics account is linked to your AdWords account and auto-tagging is enabled, you can skip this
• Examples:
  - `utm_term=undergraduate+degree`
  - `utm_term=graduate_program`
Campaign Content

• This is an *optional* parameter
• **utm_content** is usually used to help differentiate ads/links that point to the same URL. This is usually used for A/B testing and content-targeted ads.
• It can also be used to add additional information to your campaign such as ad type, market, website language version, etc.

• Examples:
  - utm_content=cta-top-banner
  - utm_content=cta-sidebar
  - utm_content=cta-bottom
Google URL Builder

• Use URL Builder to help create the required UTM parameters for your campaign

• Can be found here: go.depaul.edu/URLBuilder

• The parameters are joined using the ampersand (&) sign
More Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email campaign</th>
<th>Paid search campaign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Source</strong></td>
<td>newsletter1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Medium</strong></td>
<td>email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Term</strong></td>
<td><em>the search term associated with this traffic</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Content</strong></td>
<td>call_to_action_2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign Name</strong></td>
<td>productxyz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>productxyz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Media UTM Examples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tweet</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Pinterest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source</strong></td>
<td>twitter</td>
<td>facebook</td>
<td>pinterest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
<td>social</td>
<td>social</td>
<td>social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign</strong></td>
<td>launch-video</td>
<td>lead</td>
<td>pin-experiment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use Cases

1. Newsletter Link
   - Track how links on your newsletters are performing
   - Examples:
     • Newsletters sent out as part of a Campaign that aims to update students on fall events and activities
       ▪ utm_medium=email&utm_source=newletter&utm_campaign=FallActivities16
       ▪ utm_medium=email&utm_source=newletter&utm_campaign=FallActivities16&utm_content=top+email+banner+link
         (if in the newsletter, there are multiple links pointing to the same URL, then utm_content can be used to differentiate further those links)
2. Website Link in your email

- If you have a website link(s) in your email signature/body, there is a smart way to see which employee email generates most visits

- Examples:

  Let’s say two employees, Jane Doe and John Doe, include website links in his email about Fall 16 Activities, one in the body and another one in the signature

  - `utm_medium=email&utm_source=email+signature&utm_campaign=FallActivities16&utm_content=Jane_Doe`
  - `utm_medium=email&utm_source=email+signature&utm_campaign=FallActivities16&utm_content=John_Doe`
  - `utm_medium=email&utm_source=email+body&utm_campaign=FallActivities16&utm_content=John_Doe`
3. Social Media posts

– Untagged social links appear as Referrals (for Medium) in Google Analytics or Social Channel

– Examples:
  
  ▪ `utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=FallActivities16`
  
  ▪ `utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkedin&utm_campaign=FallActivities16`
  
  ▪ `utm_medium=email&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=FallActivities16&utm_content=Jane_Doe`
  
  ▪ `utm_medium=email&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=FallActivities16&utm_content=John_Doe`
Use Cases

4. Short URLs (bitly, goo.gl, tinyURL, Go URL, etc.)
   - You can use UTM Parameters in your Short URLs as well. In fact, masking a long URL with a short URL is a best practice. It is certainly easier to remember short URLs.
   - Short URLs can be used in OOH Advertising, printed materials, etc.
   - Examples:
     - `utm_medium=ooh&utm_source=billboard&utm_campaign=BigData16`
     - `utm_medium=print&utm_source=AdmitLetter&utm_campaign=FallAdmissions16`
Naming Convention

• As the volume of your outgoing emails grow, tracking all the different UTM parameters can become challenging.

• Use of consistent, meaningful names and proper documentation is your best friend!

• Spreadsheet templates to help you organize and keep track of your UTM Parameters:
  - https://goo.gl/VnUUs9
  - https://goo.gl/8IklWI
  - https://goo.gl/68ixWq
  - https://goo.gl/h96rZb
  - https://goo.gl/zzfgW9
  - https://goo.gl/hz1j4o
Tips and Tricks

• UTM parameters are separated with an ampersand (&)

• Parameter Values can be separated with a space. Use the Percentage (%) or Plus (+) sign for this.
  – Examples: `utm_content=John%Doe` or `utm_content=John+Doe`
    In Google Analytics, this will show up as John Doe

• To view tagged campaigns in Google Analytics, navigate to: **Acquisition → Campaigns → All Campaigns**
Tips and Tricks

• Avoid tagging internal links (on your site) with UTM parameters! Because each time a link containing UTM parameters is clicked, a new visit is generated. So you could be a returning visitor, but incorrectly treated as a new visitor!

• Again, keep Parameter Names consistent and meaningful
  – This is a good guide to naming UTM parameters: http://blog.rafflecopter.com/2014/04/utm-naming-conventions/
Resources

- https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033867
- https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1037445
- https://blog.bufferapp.com/utm-guide
- http://www.degordian.com/education/blog/5-cool-examples-of-utm-tracking/
- https://blog.kissmetrics.com/how-to-use-utm-parameters/