

AccuWeather Unlocks Cross-Channel Impact Using Measurement Protocol in Google Analytics Premium



About AccuWeather

- AccuWeather is the world's largest weather media company, providing real-time weather news and information with Superior Accuracy™ 24 hours per day.
- Headquarters: State College, PA
- www.accuweather.com

Goals

- Get a full picture of online and offline campaign effectiveness
- Capture behavior of the full mobile audience
- Find a single solution for holistic analytics

Approach

- Used the Measurement Protocol to collect data from sources it was previously unable to track in Google Analytics

Results

- Measured 80% open rate in custom weather forecast email service
- Counted app downloads in overall measurement
- Filled previously unmeasurable analytics, revealing 10% more mobile traffic

Is it going to rain today? The weather has an impact on everyone's life, and no one knows that better than AccuWeather, the world's largest weather media company. A global leader in digital, the brand provides real-time weather news and information on AccuWeather.com and through its suite of apps for the more than 1 billion people who rely on its services every day. Although the company has a strong digital presence, it needed to find a way to increase the impact of digital across all its channels and products.

Proving the impact of multiple customer touchpoints

AccuWeather provides real-time weather information to its customers through AccuWeather.com, which works through various mobile apps and custom email services. Because its customers interact with these different products and multiple campaign media, the company needed a robust solution that collected data from each touchpoint and facilitated a comprehensive analysis.

AccuWeather wanted to evaluate how many of its weather forecast email alerts were being opened. Other campaigns used QR codes and shortened URLs that directed users to mobile app stores, but these were difficult to track. In addition, some users were interacting with AccuWeather's content on devices that did not support JavaScript and therefore required a different solution.

AccuWeather's team set out to find a way to analyze the effectiveness of weather forecast emails, attribute credit to campaigns that drove users to app store pages, and better understand AccuWeather's mobile audience. It was important to view these interactions in the Google Analytics Premium interface alongside other metrics. Above all, the team wanted to collect this new data without compromising the company's fast and simple user experience.

Measuring the full customer experience with one solution

To get a holistic view of its audience and collect accurate data, AccuWeather looked to Google Analytics Premium, and used the Measurement Protocol feature, which allows organizations to send data to Google Analytics Premium from any internet-connected device. It's particularly useful for sending data to Google Analytics from a kiosk, a point of sale system, or anything that is not a website or mobile app. Using the Measurement Protocol, AccuWeather was able to effectively collect information about how its audience engages through email,

offline campaigns, and other devices. After collecting this data, it was able to analyze the complete picture using the Google Analytics Premium reporting interface.

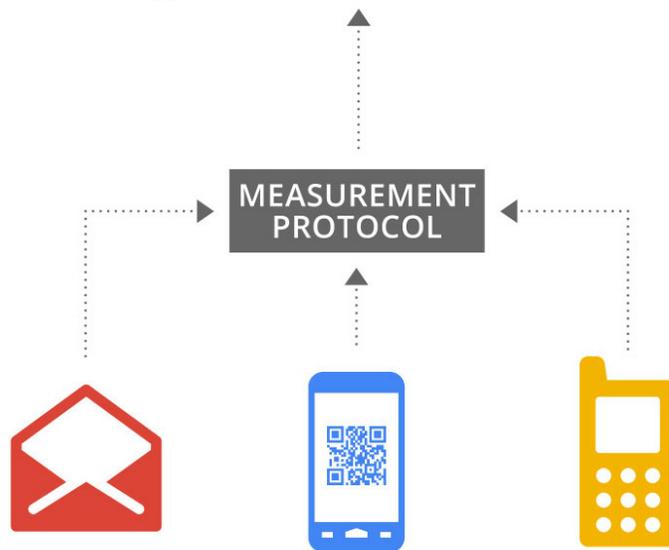
The integrated solution of Google Analytics Premium plus the Measurement Protocol allowed AccuWeather to track a variety of the company's services simultaneously from one source. "The ability to overlay our own data on top of traditional dimensions and metrics has provided valuable insights into the kind of information our consumers are looking for," says Steve Mummey, director of browser products at AccuWeather.

Now, when an individual opens the weather email alert, AccuWeather sends a new hit to Google Analytics Premium using the Measurement Protocol. This allows AccuWeather to measure how many users opened these emails and relate that data to other engagement metrics.

Additionally, when a user accesses a third-party app store by clicking on a shortened URL or scanning a QR code, AccuWeather uses the Measurement Protocol to collect information about that interaction and send it to Google Analytics Premium. Thus, it solves the issue of tracking hits from non-AccuWeather sites (including Google Play and the iTunes store) without negatively affecting the user's experience.

Finally, AccuWeather has gained a more holistic understanding of its mobile audience by capturing traffic coming from mobile devices that don't support (or have disabled) JavaScript. By collecting hits from these devices via the Measurement Protocol, AccuWeather is able to better identify this audience and customize its monetization strategy for users from these devices.

Google Analytics Premium



Measurement Protocol sends data collated from email, smartphones/QR codes and feature phones into Google Analytics Premium.

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Increasing results with accurate, data-based decisions

With its additional insights, AccuWeather was able to confirm the effectiveness of its email product. “We’ve found that our custom weather forecast email service has an 80% open rate, and we’re able to use all of that related data in Google Analytics Premium, which we use for all our digital products,” says Mummey.

Using the Measurement Protocol to track application traffic from QR codes and other offline campaigns to the app stores, AccuWeather has been able to more accurately identify the source of app downloads. “Our team now has the ability to measure the effectiveness of various offline campaigns by attributing application downloads to those campaigns,” notes Mummey.

Finally, AccuWeather’s analysis revealed that 10% of the brand’s mobile traffic came from devices that either did not support JavaScript or had the feature disabled. Without using the Measurement Protocol, the team would never have been able to account for this portion of its audience. The team can now include this audience in its product and monetization decisions.

Pleased with the success of this solution, AccuWeather now plans to apply it to other parts of its business to uncover new insights, new leads, and, of course, new customers. It plans to deploy Measurement Protocol to send a hit whenever information is requested from one of its legacy data feeds. This will serve as an alert to the AccuWeather team to inform the requestor of the newer feeds available.