

PHASE 1 · KICKOFF & DISCOVERY

Analytics Measurement Plan

Goals, conversion funnels, audiences & the event taxonomy for the **guilford.edu** refresh — grounded in a live **GA4 baseline** and built to prove post-launch lift, with the long-missing **giving funnel** stood up for the first time.

CLIENT

Guilford College

ENGAGEMENT

Website & Analytics
Refresh

PREPARED

Jun 2026 · Ellis Agency

STATUS

Internal · Confidential

00 The plan, in one page

This plan layers **custom funnels, dashboards & automated reporting** onto Guilford's existing Google Analytics — **enhance, don't rebuild**. It standardizes a messy event setup, stands up the **giving funnel that doesn't exist today**, and sets pre-launch benchmarks so the refresh's impact is provable.

120k

sessions / 90 days
(live GA4 baseline)

\$0

giving conversions
tracked today

6+

standardized key events
(+ micro events)

5

conversion funnels
defined

WHAT THIS DELIVERABLE IS

The measurement plan for the GA4 implementation: **goals & KPIs** by audience priority, **GA4 segments/audiences**, the standardized **key-event spec**, an **event taxonomy tied to the page-type templates**, the **five funnels**, the cross-domain/GTM technical plan, and the **Looker dashboard + automated weekly/daily reports**. Benchmarks come from a live pull of property 359308554 (last 90 days, pulled Jun 22).

Biggest finding

There is zero giving/donation conversion tracking today. Every one of the 7,044 conversions in the baseline is enrollment-flavored (application + RFI clicks). Yet **donors are the priority-2 audience** and the kickoff wants a far-more-prominent Give CTA. Standing up the cross-domain giving funnel — `donation_start` → `donation_complete` — is the marquee new capability of this plan.

CONFIRMED BY THE DATA

The kickoff intuition that **~60% of traffic is direct/repeat** holds: Direct is **31.2%**, returning sessions **31.2%**, and the top pages are dominated by known-audience destinations (`/current-students`, `/faculty-and-staff`, `/account/login`). **Do not narrow the site.**

Governing directives — every part of the plan honors these

Audience priority — locked

Enrollment + giving first

Keep current students in view

Automated weekly/daily reports

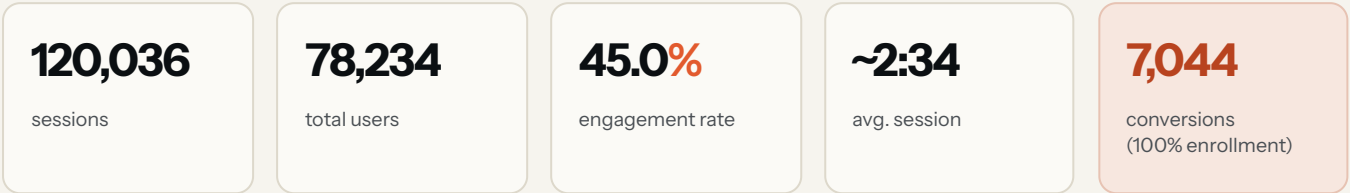
Enhance, don't rebuild

Seasonal flexibility

Future personalization

01 Pre-launch baseline (benchmarks)

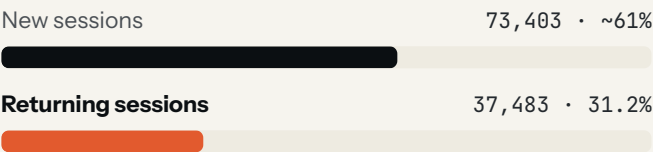
A live pull of GA4 property 359308554, last 90 days (pulled Jun 22). These are the benchmarks the post-launch plan proves lift against — annotate the launch date in GA4 for a clean before/after.



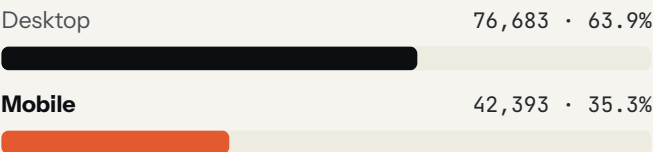
Traffic mix — by channel

CHANNEL	SESSIONS	SHARE
Organic Search	62,216	51.8%
Direct	37,507	31.2%
Display (Encoura)	6,113	5.1%
Referral	4,856	4.0%
Organic Social	3,721	3.1%
Paid Other	3,080	2.6%

New vs returning



Device split



READ OFF THE BASELINE

Organic + Direct are **83%** of traffic; paid (Encoura display + paid social) is a measured, attributable slice to keep clean. The Direct + returning weight, plus the top-page mix, is the current-student/applicant loyalty signal — the site must keep serving them.

Top pages (views / sessions)

PATH	VIEWS	SESS.	ROLE
/	44,537	37,370	Front door — every audience
/current-students	15,946	12,506	Returning / known audience
/faculty-and-staff	8,193	6,542	Faculty & staff wayfinding
/admissions/apply	7,840	7,378	Enrollment funnel
/directory	7,627	2,184	People directory
/program-finder	6,179	4,854	Program interest
/admitted-students	4,468	3,939	Yield / known audience
/account/login	4,027	2,700	Current-student re-entry
/apply/status	2,677	1,665	Applicant re-entry

Current conversions (key events)

EVENT	CONV.	TYPE
guilford_college_application	2,842	Enrollment
guilford_application_button	1,889	Enrollment
guilford_app_click_to_apply_site	1,068	Enrollment
click_to_email	483	Micro / contact
request_information_click	481	RFI (click, not submit)
application_page_visit	183	Enrollment
click_to_call	98	Micro / contact

Plus un-keyed: form_start 15.8k · form_submit 12.7k (generic, not segmented by purpose) · site_search/view_search_results 1.3k.

Gaps the plan closes — read straight off the baseline

No giving tracking

Donors are priority-2, but giving has zero conversions. Stand up a cross-domain donation funnel (giving.guilford.edu / GiveCampus).

Vendor / ad-hoc events

guilford_* *3 overlap for one action. Standardize (apply_start/apply_submit...) with a reconciliation path so the baseline still ties out.

Generic forms

form_start/form_submit fire 15.8k/12.7k but carry no form_type — unusable as funnel steps until segmented.

Off-domain & unjoined

Apply portal, catalog, events & giving are unmeasured; portal.mist.com/referral (1,834) is an un-joined hop. The T6 frame is the injection vehicle.

02 Goals → KPIs, by audience priority

Each KPI ties to a real baseline number and a post-launch target. Targets are framed as relative lift; absolute targets get set at the next pass against a **full-year** pull (admissions seasonality). "New" KPIs have no baseline — standing them up *is* the goal.

PRIORITY 1 — PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS & FAMILIES (ENROLLMENT INTENT)

KPI	BASELINE (90D)	TARGET / THRESHOLD
Apply starts	≈1,889+1,068 (overlapping legacy)	+15% on a clean single apply_start
Apply submits	≈2,842 guilford_college_application	+10%; start→submit ratio measurable for the first time
RFI submits	481 + 478 (click-level only)	establish true submit metric; +20% vs click proxy
Visits scheduled	0 tracked (/visit traffic exists)	stand up; baseline first 90d, then +10%
Program interest	not segmented (finder 6,179 pv)	stand up; leading indicator of apply_start

PRIORITY 2 — EXTERNAL CONSTITUENTS (GIVING ENGAGEMENT) • BIGGEST GAP

KPI	BASELINE (90D)	TARGET / THRESHOLD
Give CTR	0 tracked	stand up; homepage + footer Give-CTR baseline
Donation starts	0 tracked	stand up cross-domain; baseline first 90d
Donation completes (+ value)	0 tracked	stand up; report gift count + revenue — headline new capability
Alumni / community engagement	partial (file_download 660)	stand up email_signup + event_rsvp

PRIORITY 3 – CURRENT STUDENTS (WAYFINDING) • KEEP IN VIEW, DON'T NARROW

KPI	BASELINE (90D)	TARGET / THRESHOLD
Wayfinding success	/current-students 15,946 pv; high direct/repeat	hold/grow engagement on these paths; don't regress
Site-search efficacy	view_search_results 1,349 (no zero-result signal)	stand up site_search {results_count}; zero-result < 15%

PRIORITY 4 – FACULTY / STAFF (WAYFINDING)

KPI	BASELINE (90D)	TARGET / THRESHOLD
F/S re-entry	/faculty-and-staff 8,193 pv; /work-here 2,741; /directory 7,627	hold engagement; don't regress wayfinding

CROSS-CUTTING – REACH, QUALITY & COMPARABILITY (ALL AUDIENCES)

KPI	BASELINE (90D)	TARGET / THRESHOLD
Sessions	120,036	hold/grow; watch for migration dips (annotate)
Engagement rate	45.0%	≥ 47% (consistency / IA / mobile)
% Direct + % Returning	Direct 31.2% • Returning 31.2%	hold — signals retained loyalty
Mobile engagement	Mobile 35.3% / Desktop 63.9%	grow mobile engagement (mobile-first refresh)

CADENCE & OWNERS

Automated **weekly** (account lead + Guilford marketing) and **daily** (internal ops watch) Looker email. Every KPI gets a named owner; any KPI without an owner and a decision attached gets cut.

03 Audiences → GA4 segments / audiences

Built in Ty's **locked** order (confirmed by Jean), each **twice-purpose**: a reporting segment now, and a publishable GA4 Audience for future **personalization & remarketing**. Defined by the baseline behaviors actually observed in the pull.

1 Prospective students & families

DEFINED BY /admissions*, /apply/*, /program-finder, program/major pages, /visit*; or firing apply_start / request_info_submit / program_interest.

USE Sub-audiences (preserve): HS · Transfer · Graduate · Adult · International. Remarketing seed: apply_start-without-submit.

2 External: donors → alumni → community

DEFINED BY Give-CTA clickers, donation_start (cross-domain), giving-landing viewers; alumni/community via news engagement, email_signup, event_rsvp.

USE Baseline anchors: **none giving-side** (the gap). Remarketing seed: donation_start-without-complete (highest-ROI new audience).

3 Current students

DEFINED BY Direct + returning sessions on /current-students, /account/login, /apply/status; portal.mist.com referrers.

USE The "~60% direct/repeat" cohort — confirmed. Personalization candidate (returning → student quick-links module).

4 Faculty / staff

DEFINED BY Sessions on /faculty-and-staff, /work-here, /directory; internal-tool referrers.

USE Guard wayfinding; lowest emphasis but a real, recurring audience.

CROSS-CUT (OPERATIONAL) Mobile vs Desktop · New vs Returning · Encoura-sourced (display 6,113 + paid social 3,080) for paid-media attribution.

04 Conversions (GA4 key events) + reconciliation

A clean, standardized key-event set replaces the overlapping vendor names. The primary events drive the north-star and the funnels; micro events are leading indicators.

KEY EVENT	TRIGGER	KEY PARAMETERS	RECONCILES / RETIRES
apply_start	Click into the application from any Apply CTA / apply portal handoff	cta_type · template · audience_priority · apply_level	Replaces guilford_application_button / app_click_to_apply / application_page_visit
apply_submit	Application submitted (apply-portal confirmation, cross-domain)	apply_level · source_template · device	Replaces guilford_college_application
request_info_submit	RFI form submit (form_submit {form_type:rfi})	program_interest · audience_priority	Replaces request_information_click / request_info
visit_scheduled	Visit / tour scheduled (form or scheduler confirmation)	visit_type · date · template	NEW — no current equivalent
donation_start	Give flow begins on giving.guilford.edu / GiveCampus (cross-domain)	gift_designation · source_template · entry_cta	NEW — biggest gap
donation_complete	Donation confirmation page (cross-domain)	value · currency · gift_type · gift_designation	NEW — biggest gap

Micro / supporting events

cta_click

program_interest

viewbook_view

email_signup

event_rsvp

video_play / progress

site_search

file_download

click_to_email / call

RECONCILIATION — SO THE BASELINE TIES FORWARD

Fire **both** the legacy guilford_* events and the new standardized events in parallel for ~30 days; build a legacy↔new mapping in Looker so the pre-launch baseline stitches cleanly to post-launch. Then retire the legacy events from "key" status (keep collecting briefly for audit). **Never delete history** — annotate the cutover date.

05 Event taxonomy tied to the templates

Instrument once, globally. One standardized event schema is baked into the shared component kit that powers **P0 + T1-T5** and the portable **T6 frame**. A CTA, card, filter or form emits the *same* event with the *same* params no matter which template renders it — the direct synergy with the page-type inventory.

SHARED COMPONENT	EVENT	NOTE
CTA system / bands	cta_click (+ apply_start / donation_start when it's the funnel entry)	Give CTR + all CTA reporting
Card grids	card_click	card_type · label · position
Filter / sort + Load More	filter_use · load_more	filter_type · value · results_count
Forms	form_start · form_submit {form_type}	fixes the generic 15.8k/12.7k problem
Article body / media	video_play · video_progress · file_download · scroll	engagement on the highest-volume type
Stat / promo banner	cta_click · viewbook_view	giving + viewbook promos
Global search	site_search	search_term · results_count

Canonical parameter dictionary

PARAMETER	VALUES / FORMAT	PURPOSE
template	P0, T1-T6	which template fired it
page_type	homepage · hub · article · listing · profile · program · event · interior · landing · external	maps to the 10 page types
audience_priority	1-4	powers audience-priority dashboards
cta_type	apply · give · visit · rfi · login · learn	CTA classification (Give CTR)
position	hero · nav · body · sidebar · footer · banner	did the prominent Give placement work?
device	mobile · desktop · tablet	mobile-first validation
form_type	apply · rfi · visit · contact · newsletter · event_rsvp	the fix for generic forms
value · gift_type · gift_designation	amount · one_time/recurring · fund	giving revenue reporting

DATALAYER CONTRACT The component kit pushes a uniform dataLayer object ({event, ...params}); **GTM** maps it to GA4. The T6 frame ships the same push + GTM snippet, so non-Drupal systems emit identical events with zero per-system work.

06 Conversion funnels

Five funnels expressed as the standardized events. Most ratios are **first-measurable post-launch** — that's the point. Highlighted steps are key events.

A Enrollment (primary)

session_start → cta_click {apply} → Admissions hub → apply_start → apply_submit

BASELINE /admissions/apply 7,378 sessions; legacy app events ≈2,842 conv. True start→submit ratio not currently computable — standardization makes it computable.

B Giving (cross-domain)

entry / hero → cta_click {give} → giving landing → donation_start → donation_complete

NET-NEW Zero giving tracking today. Stand up the full cross-domain funnel; first 90d post-launch is the giving baseline. Prominent homepage Give CTA (PO) is the top-of-funnel lever.

C Visit

entry → /visit·campus-map → cta_click {visit} → scheduler → visit_scheduled

NET-NEW /visit + /visit/campus-map rank in the top ~15 pages but no visit_scheduled event exists — net-new conversion.

D Request info (RFI)

entry → cta_click {rfi} → form_start {rfi} → request_info_submit

BASELINE Click proxies 481 + 478; generic form_start 15,767 / form_submit 12,708. Segmenting forms gives the first true RFI start→submit rate.

E Current-student wayfinding (success = fast exit)

entry (direct/return) → /current-students·login → cta_click {p3} / site_search → task complete

BASELINE /current-students 12,506 sessions; login 2,700; Direct 31.2% + Returning 31.2%. Metric is engagement + low search-refinement; guardrail is no regression post-refresh.

07 Cross-domain & technical plan

What makes off-domain conversions (giving, apply_submit) measurable and attributable — and how the refresh's component kit + T6 frame carry consistent tracking everywhere.

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>01 Audit first, enhance — don't rebuild.</p> | <p>Inventory the current GTM container / gtag, existing key events & streams before changing anything; map legacy → new so no history is lost.</p> | <p>02 Standardize via GTM.</p> | <p>Move event firing into one GTM container fed by the component-kit dataLayer — one container, one mapping, all templates.</p> |
| <p>03 Cross-domain measurement</p> | <p>across guilford.edu, the apply portal (/apply/*, portal.mist.com), giving.guilford.edu / GiveCampus, catalog.guilford.edu, and the events platform.</p> | <p>04 Referral exclusions</p> | <p>for those hosts so cross-domain hops don't fragment sessions or self-attribute (today portal.mist.com/referral = 1,834 is an un-joined hop).</p> |
| <p>05 T6 is the injection vehicle.</p> | <p>The portable frame ships the GTM snippet + the same dataLayer push, so non-Drupal systems emit identical events with no per-system engineering.</p> | <p>06 Consent Mode v2 / ADA-privacy.</p> | <p>Implement analytics_storage / ad_storage consent, keyboard-accessible banner (WCAG AA), and flag consent-driven gaps loudly so trends don't lie.</p> |

HARD DEPENDENCY — GATES OFF-DOMAIN MEASUREMENT

Deploying one GTM container + the T6 dataLayer/GTM snippet on the apply portal, giving platform, catalog & events requires **IT sign-off (Gloria Thornton)** plus **GiveCampus tag access**. Without it, the giving funnel and a true apply_submit can't be measured.

08

Dashboards + automated reports

A Looker Studio dashboard organized by **audience priority**, plus automated weekly + daily email — satisfying the kickoff's "automated reporting" ask.

Enrollment apply_start/submit, RFI submit, visit_scheduled, start→submit funnel, by template & device	Giving (net-new) Give CTR, donation_start/complete, revenue (value), funnel	Audience reach sessions, new vs returning, % Direct + % Returning, channel mix (Encoura called out)
Content / top pages top pages & sections (news volume), engagement rate, duration	Wayfinding / search current-student + faculty/staff path engagement, site_search + zero-result rate	Mobile vs desktop split + engagement — validating the mobile-first refresh
→ Distribution. Dashboard analytics) and the embedUrl as a live URL goes deliverable embed. to the project link library (kind		→ Automated email. Looker scheduled delivery — weekly (account lead + Guilford marketing), daily (internal ops watch).
→ Portal metrics auto-pull. The GA4 seam is live (gaPropertyId 359308554); manual metrics stay the source of truth until adopted.		→ Clean before/after. Annotate launch + tracking-cutover dates in GA4 so comparisons are honest.

SUCCESS THRESHOLDS (POST-LAUNCH, VS RECONCILED BASELINE)

Enrollment: apply_start **+15%**, apply_submit **+10%**, RFI submit **+20%**. Giving: Give CTR + donation funnel **established from zero**. Quality: engagement **≥ 47%**, mobile up, **no wayfinding regression**. Comparability: standardized events live, legacy reconciled, forms segmented.

→ Where this leaves us

- **Baseline set:** 120,036 sessions / 90d, 45.0% engagement, 7,044 conversions — all enrollment-flavored.
- **Goals & KPIs:** defined by audience priority (enrollment → giving → current-student wayfinding → faculty/staff), each with a baseline + lift target.
- **Events standardized:** six key events + micro events, with a 30-day dual-fire reconciliation off the legacy guilford_* names.
- **Instrument once:** one event taxonomy baked into the component kit + T6 frame — consistent across every page type and the non-Drupal systems.
- **Five funnels** incl. the net-new cross-domain **giving** funnel; a Looker dashboard by audience priority + automated weekly/daily reports.

NEXT 3 ACTIONS

1. Confirm the cross-domain GTM/dataLayer injection (T6) with **IT — Gloria Thornton**, plus GiveCampus tag access — gates the giving + apply_submit measurement.
2. Audit the existing GA4 / GTM setup and build the legacy↔new event mapping; start the 30-day dual-fire window.
3. Build the Looker dashboard (by audience priority) → drop its embed + link-library entry; schedule the weekly/daily email.

OPEN DEPENDENCIES

GiveCampus tag access & confirmation-page reachability · legacy guilford_* event ownership (Encoura) for retirement · GTM container ownership · apply-portal submit signal · visit-scheduler platform · full-year pull for seasonality-anchored absolute targets · Guilford consent/privacy posture.