

EX1059

Glossary

Learn about analytics, product, and technical terms and get their definitions in our Glossary.

Universally unique identifier (UUID)

Tracking user behavior is essential in modern analytics. It provides valuable insights into user behavior, aiding in making calculated and data-driven decisions. However, monitoring user information comes with its own set of challenges and user privacy concerns. The use of any data identifying a user must be valid and secure. This is where universally unique identifiers (UUIDs) come into play.

Below, we'll define UUIDs, discuss their uses in analytics, and compare them

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to third-party cookie systems.

What are universally unique identifiers (UUIDs)?

Universally unique identifiers, or UUIDs, are strings assigned to a specific data element, primarily for identification purposes. The most significant difference between UUIDs and traditional identifiers is that UUIDs are universally unique. This means there is a very low probability of two values generating the same UUID. This uniqueness of UUIDs allows for easier identification of specific data elements across various platforms, applications, systems, and databases without the loss of consistency in data analysis.

In product and [web analytics](#), UUIDs can track user behavior across various platforms, such as mobile applications, websites, and web applications. By assigning a universally

Marketing qualified lead (MQL)

Mobile analytics

Onboarding

Product analytics

Product features

Product led growth (PLG)

Product management

unique identifier to a user, you can quickly identify their behavior and analyze it, providing insights on improving your product.

UUIDs versus cookies

On the other hand, third-party cookie systems are used to collect information from the end users' browsers. A cookie is a piece of data stored in a user's browser that a website can retrieve later. When a third-party website inserts a cookie into a user's machine, they can track the user across multiple websites. However, many users are uncomfortable sharing their data, and more clarity about what is done with their data is often needed. The use of third-party cookies in analytics has reduced due to privacy concerns, and major web browsers now block third-party cookies.

A significant advantage of UUIDs over cookie tracking is that UUIDs do not contain any personally identifiable information (PII). The tracking data is anonymous and, therefore, maintains

user privacy. UUIDs are generated from a combination of machine and timestamp values, ensuring the identifier's uniqueness. This also means that users a part of UUID tracking cannot have their identity traced from the UUID alone. This non-identification of the user eliminates privacy concerns.

UUIDs provide a more detailed picture of user behavior than traditional cookie systems. You can track their activities across multiple websites, platforms, and applications by assigning a unique identifier to each user. Unique UUIDs can be generated for each user of those apps or websites and assigned to them for their entire journey across different devices or browsers. This analysis can provide insight into [user behavior analytics](#) and help in better decision-making and optimization of pages.

In conclusion, UUIDs are excellent alternatives to third-party cookie systems for anonymous user tracking, which maintains user privacy. They help identify specific data elements across various

platforms, applications, systems, and databases without sacrificing consistency. In today's world, where privacy is a significant concern, UUIDs collect anonymous data that benefits analytics while protecting user privacy.

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