A practical guide for naming links, checking GA4 traffic, and measuring conversions

UTM tags label where a visit came from. Conversion tracking records what the visitor did. Use both, because UTMs alone never record a lead, a booked call or a sale.

01 Understand the five core UTM fields

Parameter	What it records	Example
utm_source	Where the traffic came from	facebook
utm_medium	Marketing channel or type	paid_social
utm_campaign	Campaign or promotion	spring_webinar_2026
utm_content	Specific ad or creative	video_testimonial_01
utm_term	Keyword or audience detail (optional)	marketing_consulting

Not every link needs every field. Use source, medium and campaign consistently. An optional **utm_id** gives a campaign a stable identifier, such as webinar26_01.

02 Use a standard naming dictionary

Traffic	Source	Medium	Typical GA4 channel
Facebook / Instagram ads	facebook / instagram	paid_social	Paid Social
LinkedIn ads	linkedin	paid_social	Paid Social
TikTok ads	tiktok	paid_social	Paid Social
Pinterest ads	pinterest	paid_social	Paid Social
Google Search ads*	google	cpc	Paid Search
Microsoft Search ads	bing	cpc	Paid Search
Email newsletter	newsletter	email	Email
Organic Instagram	instagram	organic_social	Organic Social
Partner referral	partner_name	referral	Referral

*If Google Ads is linked to GA4, keep auto-tagging on and don't replace it with manual UTMs. GA4 assigns channels with its own rules, so check your reports rather than assuming every link lands exactly as shown.

03 Build a complete tracking URL

https://yourwebsite.com/services?
utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=paid_social&utm_campaign=spring_webinar_2026&utm_content=video_testimonial_01

The first parameter starts with **?** and each one after it starts with **&**. If the page URL already has a ?, add yours with & and keep the existing parameters. Anything after # stays at the very end.

Email newsletter
https://yourwebsite.com/services?
utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=november_newsletter&utm_content=hero_button

Instagram profile
https://yourwebsite.com/?
utm_source=instagram&utm_medium=organic_social&utm_campaign=profile_link

04 Agree on naming rules first

- Lowercase, underscores, descriptive: spring_webinar_2026, not Spring Webinar.
- One spelling per source and medium. Never mix facebook, fb and Facebook.
- Name campaigns after a real business initiative, not labels like test1.
- Use utm_content to tell creatives apart, such as static_offer_01.
- Keep emails, names and phone numbers out of UTM values.
- Keep one shared naming sheet so everyone tags links the same way.

05 Set up measurement in order

A **Define the conversion:** a qualified lead, booked call, submitted form or purchase.

B **Install and test tracking** in GA4 and each ad platform. Confirm the event fires.

C **Create tagged links** from your dictionary. For Google Ads, check auto-tagging and the GA4 link.

D **Check the landing page** loads and redirects keep the UTMs.

E **Check reporting** in GA4: Reports → Acquisition → Traffic acquisition. Compare session source / medium with the default channel group. Data can take time to appear.

06 Avoid the common mistakes

Treating UTMs as conversion tracking	→ Set up and verify real conversion events.
Mixing paid_social, social_paid and cpc	→ Document one medium per channel.
Changing source names every week	→ Keep the naming dictionary stable.
Tagging internal website links	→ Tag inbound campaign links only.
Expecting GA4 to match ad platforms	→ Expect attribution and timing to differ.

07 Check before you launch

- [ ] Offer and landing page are clear
- [ ] Conversion events are tested
- [ ] UTM values follow the dictionary
- [ ] Tagged links open the intended page
- [ ] GA4 receives test traffic
- [ ] Google Ads auto-tagging is on, if used
- [ ] Results judged on leads, sales and profit