The Measure Pod: #69 Dry your eyes, say your goodbyes, another one dies, it’s Google Optimize!

Intro - [00:00:15]

Topic - [00:01:05]

Wind down - [00:27:50]

Outro - [00:31:21]

### Intro

[00:00:15] **Dara:** On today's episode, Dan and I talk about the recent news of another Google product being sunset, which is Google Optimize. We talk about when it's happening, why it's happening, why we think it's happening and what it might mean in terms of some of the other changes that Google have been making lately.

[00:00:31] **Daniel:** And a product that's not getting sunset, that's Google Analytics 4. We've recently announced new prices and dates for our cohort GA4 Immersion training course, which you can find over on our website and a link will be in the show notes. We're running a little promotional discount for anyone that wants to sign up early, so be sure to get in there to get the early bird price in and hope you enjoy the show.

[00:00:52] **Dara:** Hello and welcome back to The Measure Pod, a podcast for analytics enthusiasts to talk about all things analytics and data related. I'm Dara, I'm CEO at Measurelab.

[00:01:01] **Daniel:** And I'm Dan, I'm a consultant and trainer at Measurelab.

Topic

[00:01:05] **Dara:** So Dan the sun is setting yet again, more bombshells from Google, many people listening probably will already be aware of this but Google have announced that they're going to be sunsetting, Google Optimize, and Google Optimize 360, I should add.

[00:01:17] **Daniel:** Yeah, less of a bombshell of a sunsetting announcement than the last one of Google Analytics or Universal Analytics. And I have a feeling that, and obviously we'll talk about what it means and what's going on and I suppose the reaction to it. But I find actually the reaction to this probably the most interesting part of it. I don't think I've seen almost a single person mentioning Google Optimize for well over a year, and now all of a sudden it's the biggest deal in the world that it's going away. So I think that in itself is actually more interesting than the announcement.

[00:01:44] **Dara:** Interesting, so I haven't, I have to admit I've been kind of keeping up to date with the, you know, Google's official announcement about it, and I've seen a couple of other bits and pieces, but I haven't probably been looking at the reaction. Well, obviously I haven't, not as closely as you. So what people are surprised, frustrated, annoyed, a little bit of all of those, what's your synopsis of the reaction to it Dan?

[00:02:04] **Daniel:** I think it's a bit of all of that. I don't think I've seen anyone being angry about it not like the Google Analytics announcement that is. I think maybe we'll just get round to talking about this through today's episode, but I think actually it's more around the changing of things at Google, and I suppose it is just another announcement on top of other things that kind of compiles on top of other things. I'm wondering if there's maybe a more of a pessimistic sentiment around this as maybe the start of many things, or maybe there's more to come, I don't know. But I think that it's not about the tool, I think it's about how Google's maybe quite obviously now pivoting and refocusing their attention onto to fewer but maybe more detailed tools than what they currently have.

[00:02:44] **Dara:** Well yeah, I think you're right that I think it's that fear, isn't it? That's probably a big factor. People are thinking, well, what's next?

[00:02:49] **Daniel:** Yeah, exactly. Is anything safe? Exactly. And I think that's the thing is that what is isn't safe is hard to predict. You know, everyone kind of thought that Google Analytics would be around forever, and although it is in some form, it is the legacy that is going to be around, the actual product is going to die off in July this year and 360 next year, of course. But let's talk about some of the reaction to it, let's talk about the announcement probably, first of all. So if you haven't heard, Google have announced on the 20th, I believe the 20th of January, that as of the 30th of September 2023, Google Optimize will be sunset. So that is Google Optimize, their A/B testing and personalisation engine, that plugs into the Google Marketing Platform, that is going to stop working for absolutely everybody on the 31st of September. Bit of an odd date, maybe the 1st of October, who knows? But there is no extension. There is no difference between free and 360 versions. It is just going to stop for everyone at the same point.

[00:03:42] **Dara:** There is no 31st of September, by the way, just to, you know, just to shatter your illusion of how the calendar works.

[00:03:48] **Daniel:** You know, let's leave this in the edit.

[00:03:53] **Dara:** Most people call it the 1st of October, but you can call it the 31st of September if it makes you feel better.

[00:03:58] **Daniel:** Do you know what? I'm born in September as well, so I should have known that. I should have known that.

[00:04:02] **Dara:** Were you born on the 31st?

[00:04:03] **Daniel:** Yeah, actually I was yeah. Regardless of my date keeping, the point there is that the last day of September is the last day of Google Optimize. And again, I think this is, this goes to show, I suppose maybe a lack of adoption, but also maybe more of a haste to turn it off. But unlike when they announced Universal Analytics or even you know, let's take even the Google Stadia that got turned off recently. There was more of a leeway, there was more of a phase out. There was more of a, I suppose a thing about it. Whereas this feels like you've got eight months, then it's gone for everyone, no exceptions, no extensions.

[00:04:33] **Dara:** Yeah, and I think, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think they stopped collecting Universal data on the 1st of July this year, but you've got at least six months beyond that where you can still access your data. Am I right in thinking you don't get that leeway with Optimize? I think the data's going to be, you have to download the data more urgently than that because I think they're going to take away access completely. I'm doubting myself now as I say that, but I'm sure I read somewhere that there's a, you know, you don't get the same, the same grace period to go back in and look back over old experiment data.

[00:05:03] **Daniel:** No, it is saying that you have to have done all that by the 30th of September, be I suppose, slightly differently to something like Google Analytics. If you're turning on an experiment on the 29th of September, I mean, there's no chance that it's going to do anything for you right? So, I think by that point, the reality is all experiments would've come to an end and you would've had in a sense some time to export that data. But there's two pools of data with Google Optimize. You've got the experiment data which is, I suppose the way of understanding the pros and cons or the increase or decrease of your conversion rates based on the experiments that you are running, that's done all within the Google Optimize interface. But then you've also got the Google Analytics connected data, so that is the experiment data as the dimensions that are available in Google Analytics 4.

[00:05:45] **Daniel:** And the really interesting thing, and by the way there's a lot of links in the show notes. Whatever platform you're listening on, there'll be a Bitly link in there to get all the links we're talking about. But in the official announcement from Google Optimize, it actually says, relating to Google Analytics 4, you won't be able to access your experience interface results, or your historical Google Analytics, four raw data after the sunset date. So that makes me think that they're doing something with the historical data in Google Analytics 4. I mean it must do if they're talking about that, or it could be a classic Google documentation thing and maybe it's not going to do anything of the sort.

[00:06:16] **Dara:** Yeah, I guess what I'm trying to think through in my head is whether that would matter to most users. If you can get the experiment data out of, I mean, I guess it would, because that's the whole benefit of being able to pull it into GA (Google Analytics), you can work with it alongside the other dimensions and metrics in GA so if they are likely to remove that data historically as well, that's another frustration on top of people having to figure out whether they should be exporting their Universal data, their historical Universal data or not. So it might not be the most annoying thing in the world, but it could be another pain for people who now have to, you know, rethink again around pulling out some historical data, which is going to disappear from an interface.

[00:06:54] **Daniel:** Well yeah, I think it actually goes down to whether, how much you use Google Optimize, because there are some limitations and it's almost pointless now going into the benefits and the pros and cons of the free or the paid version of other products. But there were limitations in the number of experiments you can run along at one time, there were some other, you know, depending on whether you connected to Universal or GA4, there was different thresholds for certain things. It's all a bit of a mess to be honest, but there's a bunch of people there that probably are going to be annoyed. But I mean, thinking of the kind of scale or the amount of customers that might have that frustration for Google is basically a drop in the ocean, I don't think it's even worth considering. And I think that's the harsh truth, and I think this to plays into something else.

[00:07:29] **Daniel:** And I was reading [an article about this today actually, just knowing that we are going to come into this podcast Dara, and it's from an author called Maryanne](https://queenofcro.squarespace.com/blog/sunset-of-google-optimize-september-31st-2023-what-you-need-to-do-and-what-does-this-mean-to-cro). And they pulled together lots of different research into the market shares of these CRO platforms and things like that. And according to one of the sources, it says that Google Optimize actually has about 61% market share, but only around 2.4% of all of those accounts are actually running at even one experiment. The reality is that although like Google Optimize has a huge market share, because it's basically the entry point to kind of dip your toe in the water of experimentation and CRO, that actually most people kind of like bounce off it or maybe dabble in it because they don't have the bandwidth or the headspace to kind of go into it you know, full whack. So a lot of people have an account, and I think we are guilty for this too, but we have accounts but we don't actively use them in some way. So the amount of accounts that might be actively being used to an extent that will be annoyed by this is probably so small.

[00:08:21] **Dara:** Yeah, and I don't know if this is jumping ahead or not, but it maybe think of the article you shared with me earlier from VWO who have responded really quickly to this and they're introducing a free version of their tools. So it could be that they're looking to sweep up that, what did you say it was? 68% or whatever it was, of people who are maybe just entry level, but will eventually have a need for more sophisticated A/B testing tools.

[00:08:45] **Daniel:** Even if it, you know, costs you something really tiny for VWO to kind of suck up those free never to pay for customers. I mean, look at the PR, I mean, look at the marketing side. The day they announced the shutdown of Google Optimize, VWO announced the release of their free tier. It's like, you know, these guys are clever, they know what they're doing and between Google Optimize, VWO and the third one, Optimizly, they're the big three. They're the ones that cover the majority of the market share and the rest is just such a small slither in the pie chart that it's almost negligible.

[00:09:12] **Dara:** And we're definitely going to come back to Optimizely, I think we're going to talk quite a lot about them a little later. But before we do, and maybe this will tee it up, if you're listening to this and you don't yet know why this is happening, I'm going to read something out. This is Google's official reason for why Optimize is being sunset. So forgive me, I'm going to read the whole thing out verbatim, so it might sound a little wordy. “We remain committed to enabling businesses of all sizes to improve your user experiences and are investing in A/B testing in Google Analytics 4”, very interesting. “We're focused on bringing the most effective solutions and integrations to our customers, especially as we look toward the future with Google Analytics 4”, two mentions of Google Analytics 4 in one paragraph. It then goes on to say, “Optimize, though a longstanding product does not have many of the features and services that our customers request and need for experimentation testing, we therefore have decided to invest in solutions that will be more effective for our customers.”

[00:10:08] **Dara:** Hmm, so this is really interesting. So what solutions are they talking about? It's, you know, it's two paragraphs explaining why this is happening, but I think you could probably read a lot into those two paragraphs. I think the double mention of Google Analytics 4 is obviously really interesting, but it also seems a little ambiguous to me what these solutions are going to be. Are these going to be Google built solutions? Are they going to be bought solutions? Are they going to be integrations from third parties? And this is maybe where the conversation might turn back towards something like Optimizely.

[00:10:40] **Daniel:** For sure, and first of all, I apologise for anyone that's playing a drinking game every time Dara mentions GA4, everyone's getting a little bit more drunk. But yeah, I think this is really interesting I mean, the translation, at least the way I read that, is that at Google we are going to invest in A/B testing and CRO and optimisation, yet our tool sucks. So the logical conclusion is that we are going to partner buy, build, develop, whatever, a better solution. And the obvious choice is Optimizely because a couple of things, so we've done our own terrible DIY investigation on this too. But last year, early 2022, Optimizely signed a multi-year agreement with the GCP, so the Google Cloud Platform to go into partnership with them. And then a year later, Google are announcing the sunset of their CRO tool. It's not like it's happening the day after each other, but it's happening in succession and it's happening maybe uncoincidentally, and I'll read from the Optimizely article from last year where they announced this. “Optimizely’s experimentation suite joining some of the most widely used tools in the marketers repertoire, like Google Analytics on the Google Cloud platform.”

[00:11:44] **Daniel:** And so straight up its saying how Optimizely is joining Google Analytics in the GCP, which is a lot of things going on there, but fundamentally kind of stating or at least alluding to a partnership. And the next thing, next quote I'm going to read from the article from Optimizely around this multi-year agreement with the GCP was, “Google Cloud and Optimizely will also coordinate a joint go-to market and sales execution strategy to seamlessly deliver experimentation solutions to customers around the world. As part of the multi-year agreement, Optimizely and Google Cloud will collaborate closely on co-innovation, developing new and expanded digital offerings that bring the best experience possible to new and existing customers.” So again, reading between the lines.

[00:12:28] **Dara:** I mean, it sounds pretty straightforward, isn't it? Optimizely is replacing Google Optimize.

[00:12:33] **Daniel:** Yeah and the things that we kind of like talk about all the time, Dara, on and off mic, I suppose, is around how Google, especially the GCP, the GMP, that they're software developers, they build software. They don't even like selling their own products, they actually have sales partners to go do that and they have support partners like us to service it for them. And so actually, if you put something like Google Optimize in a context here where it's like selling the software direct to customers, there was never something they could monetise easily with the people they already had. If it's an ad platform, if they could monetise it via serving ads, then it'll be right in their wheelhouse. But having to have this B2B SaaS platform, is just something that felt so outside of their comfort zone anyway. So I'm just wondering, you know, fundamentally, roughly from things like the market share stats, but I'm wondering if it made them any money at all. I mean, you even got it for free, kind of like GTM360, you got the 360 version for free when you signed up with GA360. I think they even stopped selling individual Google Optimize 360 contracts. So there wasn't like its own revenue stream as such. I don't think people were signing up for GA360 because they get Google Optimize 360. I was just wondering if this was you know, destined to fail anyway.

[00:13:36] **Dara:** I don't know, as is often the case with these things as well, they can be quite confusing. And I appreciate when you're Google and you've got so many different business units and so many probably conflicting, whether it's motivations or requirements, whatever. It's probably not that easy to manage these kind of changes in a crystal clear way. But all of that PR around that strategic partnership between Optimize and Google Cloud Platform, it all suggested what now seems obvious, which is that Optimizely is going to be the testing tool of choice if you're using it alongside not just the GCP, but probably parts of the GMP (Google Marketing Platform), like namely Google Analytics. So why not just say that? Why now have this slightly, well, not just slightly, but a lot more vague reason about saying we're going to be investing in other solutions, but without clearly naming them. I don't understand that logic, but I don't know what I don't know.

[00:14:25] **Daniel:** Yeah, maybe they're just not there yet. You know, maybe they haven't developed the two-click plug and play solution for Optimizely in GA4. Maybe they haven't figured that out, maybe they haven't, you know, dotted all the T's and crossed all the I's on their contract, who knows? Maybe it's just an announcement for now.

[00:14:40] **Dara:** Potentially, and I don't know if you know the answer to this or if anyone out there listening does, they could let us know, they can enlighten us. But with VWO’s smart and timely move to release their free version, I don't know how that would compete, if it would with Optimizely, are Optimizely going to look to sweep up all of these lower kind of tier Optimize users, or are they actually just gunning for the kind of enterprise, do it at scale, all the AI and ML backed power of the GCP?

[00:15:08] **Daniel:** Look, I had a little exchange with a [friend of the show and ex-guest, Steen Rasmussen](https://www.measurelab.co.uk/blog/podcasts/analytics-maturity-today-steen-rasmussen/) on LinkedIn around this recently, and he was suggesting that Optimizely is the obvious choice for enterprise companies to kind of, in a sense, it's like The GA360 version, it's like the enterprise level. It may be the Google Optimize 360, but better, you know, it's that version. And I asked, you know, is there a SME, is there a kind of startup version of that, that's kind of covering the ground that maybe the free version of Optimize had that, which is that kind of entry level into CRO. And they said VWO actually is probably the best one for that, pretty much just because they've released their free tier. I'm wondering then if Optimizely, Optimizely is huge, by the way. It's not just an A/B testing platform, it is like one of these multifaceted things, that just does way more than maybe what we think it does to begin with.

[00:15:54] **Daniel:** I think as an enterprise and I think where Google's going in the kind of enterprise level service stuff with the GCP and the GA360, I think Optimizely is an obvious choice. Something I was thinking about a while ago, a number of years ago now, do you remember Google released their Salesforce connector to Google Analytics 360. So you've got the Salesforce Sales Cloud and something else I can't remember the name of right now, but you could import your conversions back in, but you could share audiences out to Sales Cloud. And that was the first time, at least in my memory, the first time Google Analytics partnered with a third-party platform officially, and that came shortly after Salesforce announced all of their platforms moving over to the GCP, right? So it starts with an agreement to move all of these company’s backend systems, over to the GCP and then shortly after comes some kind of announcement or like a product integration or something like that.

[00:16:38] **Daniel:** This could be the second one of those and it could be the start of a bigger trend, which is Google going down, especially from the Google Analytics, GCP, GMP side of things, going down the path of integrating with third parties rather than trying to build or buy their way to owning them themselves. When I started the top of this podcast episode, kind of like, I'm wondering if that's the bigger change behind Google. They're changing this idea of you know, maybe even we'll see something with like Data Studio. It got rebranded as Looker Studio, you know, that's starting to change over. I know I probably mention it more so than anyone else ever, but Stadia is something that was close to my heart, which has recently been switched off, and that is still around, so the technologies exist, but they're going B2B. They're selling it to publishers and game producers directly so that they can power their own games, then just turned off the B2C direct interface, that's all they've done. So I'm wondering if there's a bigger thing at Google to kind of be a bit more sort of partnership-y, and providing the technology for, rather than providing the whole interface in front end and everything else.

[00:17:36] **Dara:** Well, yeah that's interesting because a lot of these changes, they're not killing things off, well I guess they are in a way but they're not killing off the whole need for it. This is basically an acknowledgement that Optimize isn't fit for purpose. But they are openly saying, even though they're not saying exactly how they'll do this, but they're openly saying they're going to continue to invest heavily in experimentation solutions in GA4. Your example with Stadia, they didn't get rid of the tech, they just changed the offering. Same with Universal, and they're not getting rid of GA, they're just upgrading it to a brand, you know, a brand new engine, brand new tech, brand new tool.

[00:18:09] **Dara:** So you know who's to know what will happen with, we said this on this very podcast when we talked about the rebrand to Looker Studio. We said, look, who knows we're going to have to do another episode in X number of months time and look back and see what it actually meant. Because for all we know, that's a steppingstone towards a bigger change where Looker Studio could just become an enterprise level BI tool, or it could, well, who knows? Who knows what could happen? That's the point. But I guess I'm rambling a bit now, but I guess what I'm trying to say is that these, a lot of these are kind of more strategic changes. They're not just saying, oh, this product didn't work, let's just sack it off. They're saying, you know, it seems to be pointing towards something else where they're narrowing down their focus a little bit more, and a lot of it's all very cloud-based, which obviously makes sense.

[00:18:52] **Daniel:** I'm wondering what will be next actually, I'm thinking of Google with these strategic partnerships and integrations. They integrate with Salesforce, right? So that is from a CRM perspective, let's just call it CRM, email, whatever. And then they integrate with Optimizely, which is the experimentation platform, testing, personalisation engine for web. This is all web-based, of course. I wonder what they would look to partner with next to kind of complete that holistic marketing integration because they want Google Analytics 4 to power marketing right, to power the analytics and marketing and activation of. And if you can do that over in your CRM, you can do that in your digital campaigns, obviously connects to DV360, SA360, Google Ads and the like. And they're going to do that to Optimizely, I wonder if there's like a missing piece of this puzzle they're working towards filling out.

[00:19:37] **Dara:** Hmm, do you think there is?

[00:19:40] **Daniel:** I'm not sure. I'll probably have to think about that a bit more, but, oh, we can put a call out to the listeners if you think there's something missing. If there's something that we are drawing a blank on and you think that Google needs to partner with X to do X, Y, or Z, let us know. Reach out to us and let us know because you know, it'd be really fascinating to kind of start thinking about what the next potential partnership might be. Maybe we'll just keep it closer ear to the ground around these GCP partnerships say, that might be the start of all these things down the line.

[00:20:06] **Dara:** So Optimize was Google's kind of standalone web-based testing tool, but there is A/B testing capabilities within Firebase. Any thoughts on what might happen there? Is that going to continue to exist in its own right? Or is there going to be a push towards Optimizely for that and maybe Firebase will reduce down in scope over time?

[00:20:27] **Daniel:** Google Analytics 4 tries to bring these two worlds together, you know, and treat them as one. However, Firebase is such a different suite of tools, it's like saying the Google Marketing Platform, there's not one thing, there's a variety of tools. One of them as you quite righty said, you said is the Firebase A/B testing bit of it. The thing with the A/B testing thing in Firebase actually is it is a separate feature, but it's not a separate SDK. So, it uses remote Config, which is a separate thing, and it uses Google Analytics 4, I suppose, Firebase Analytics. Those two things in conjunction, it uses those to dynamically serve remote configurations based on whatever you've set up.

[00:21:00] **Daniel:** Which first of all is confusing and I've played around with it when I built an app last year and it was very fascinating, but very confusing. So I don't know if there's much overhead for them to do that. It's basically using their kind of modelling capabilities, which I think is kind of neither here nor there. I think ML and AI is part and parcel of Google nowadays, but I don't know. I mean, let's take something a bit more abstract, like Crashlytics in Firebase. Crashlytics is a separate platform, separate SDK in Firebase that measures crashes, app crashes, and reports on that. Like that in itself is not, you know, monetizable I don't think, you know, at least I don't think they are. They're kind of like, it's all kind of part of the same suite of tools. But then maybe I would've said that about Google Optimize. Well, I'm rambling for sure now, so I think, I don't know it's the answer you're after Dara. But yeah, it's interesting as a kind of thought experiment to think about the kind of app side of things, because everything we're talking about right now is all web focused, we haven't really considered the app side. I mean Optimizely might have a an app testing capabilities, and if they do and they go into this strategic partnership with, then what does that mean for the people working on the A/B testing side on Firebase?

[00:22:03] **Dara:** Well exactly, and it makes you wonder as well whether this is complete wild speculation but, you know, Optimize was a GMP tool and this strategic partnership was struck between Optimizely and the GCP back in February last year. So who's to say that the pressure to sunset Optimize didn't come from GCP? They may have said, look, we've got a partner now and we're going to push this, we don't want some other tool that's not fit for purpose in the way.

[00:22:31] **Daniel:** Well more on that point, and I think it's just something that kind of caught me off guard when I was reading out some of these quotes verbatim earlier. When it says, Optimizely’s experimentation suite, joining some of the most widely used tools in the marketer’s repertoire, “like Google Analytics on the Google Cloud Platform”. So even in the official statement from Optimizely, they're considering Google Analytics as part of the GCP and there's no secret that the backend systems will work in BigQuery and obviously there's the BigQuery connector, which gives you kind of your own version of that data too. And you know, they can monetise you over that way, and then there's like, Looker Studio is in the GCP now, you know, part of Looker, which is in the GCP. So I'm wondering if the kind of line between the GCP and the GMP is becoming blurry. Maybe there is less or no distinction between the two, I don't think it truly matters. I mean, even stupid stuff like Google Ads technically was never in the Google Marketing Platform even though it was, you know, it was almost like a secret member, probably didn't want to rock that boat too much, but it absolutely was.

[00:23:27] **Daniel:** So I'm wondering if they're maybe even just rethinking the GMP because you think of Firebase now as well, or maybe even it's just GA4 that's kind of got his finger in multiple pies. It's kind of branching off because it's kind of, the app side is in Firebase, the backend systems in the GCP, the marketing side is in the GMP and it's just, it doesn't feel like it lives in one of these.

[00:23:46] **Dara:** Well, if you take that a step further then is the GMP, does the GMP need to exist going forward? Because with Looker Studio now sitting more firmly in the GCP. GA4 underpinned by GCP, testing and experimentation being pushed into GCP with the Optimizely partnership, even Google Tag Manager with maybe more and more people over time, moving towards server-side, maybe that's going to be more reliant on GCP too. Is the GMP as its own entity going to become a little bit redundant. And then the monster that is Google Ads that can continue to sit maybe in its own special category. You know, it's almost like you mentioned about the blurry line well, it's become really blurry because what's the distinction between using the cloud and using these kind of like marketing tools that are backed by the cloud.

[00:24:31] **Daniel:** I mean, you heard it here folks first. Dara, you know, this is the quote of the episode. “Google closes the Google Marketing Platform.” Dara Fitzgerald 2023. I suppose it always goes without saying that we don't know anything here, and we are just speculating and even the partnership with Optimizely, it's not official, we're just kind of taking a, not a wild swing, maybe an educated swing with one eye open. It's becoming harder to define it all and to know where those lines are, and maybe even having lines and having this is pointless, like you're saying do we even need to define it? Does there need to be a GMP and a GCP when they're also heavily integrated. All of the Firebase stuff, for example is all based on the GCP too. You know, like it's all the GCP, it's everything they have is in the GCP.

[00:25:12] **Dara:** The GCP is just consuming everything.

[00:25:14] **Daniel:** So why have a differentiation? Why label any of it? It's just it is what it is. Here's a Google product, here's Google Ads, here's YouTube, here's Google Analytics. And you know my thoughts around Google Analytics is going to eventually power all of this stuff, you know, all the data into, you know, the backend databases, but powering all the ad platforms through DV360, you know, Google Ads, all that crazy stuff. And potentially now Salesforce and Optimizely, right? I think it's interesting to see where this goes and worth keeping a closer eye on in the future. Not just the future of Google Analytics because that's kind of, I don't want to say boring, it's just kind of something that we'll be doing and everyone else will be doing anyway. But the future on the relationship between the GCP, Google Analytics, and the rest of the Google Marketing Platform, and the kind of collab, I don't want to say collaborations, these multi-year partnerships that Google are going into. So these companies that they're signing up to, and they're not signing them up with Google Analytics, they're not signing them up with the GMP, they're signing them up to the GCP and I think that's the important part here, is that if they get them in the bag, in the GCP, It looks like Google's end goal and very much what they're kind of looking towards for the future.

[00:26:16] **Daniel:** So yeah, very interesting to see how the, I want to say it's not really disruption to the market, I'm sure there's a couple of people that will be annoyed about this Optimize stuff, but I think in, you know, like I said at the top, it's like the interesting thing is where the hell this is going and what's changing at Google's backend. I'll give you another quote from that article that I read that did the kind of market research data, putting that together. This is from a blog that's called The Queen of CRO, so it's someone that knows what they're talking about. And it says that “I would argue that we'll see in CRO in 2023 getting a good growth in maturity because if organisations pay for a tool, they're more likely to put effort and time in getting value from it”. I completely wholeheartedly agree with that. I think the point is, is if there's a free version, and I know, VWO in a sense replacing the free version, but if a free version goes away and everyone has to start thinking about paying for something, people start paying more attention to it and start investing in it with a bit more than just money, but time, attention, effort, and basically ROI.

[00:27:08] **Dara:** Just one thing to add, I'm really enjoying doing these kind of like, maybe it's a bit overselling it saying it's kind of breaking news episodes, that is what it feels a little bit like and given our kind of first take on what we think about some piece of news that's come out, I just hope there's not any more kind of like significant bombshells with anymore products that we use being sunset. But these ones are fun where there's a change and we kind of throw out lots of wild ideas about what it might mean. And we're going to get to look back on all these and see how right or very very wrong we were.

[00:27:37] **Daniel:** Most likely the latter, but we'll enjoy it while it's going on.

[00:27:39] **Dara:** We've got to be right from time to time. If we make enough crazy predictions, some of them will be right, eventually.

[00:27:44] **Daniel:** That's it, we'll just keep pumping out weekly opinions and eventually something in there will be right and we'll justify the rest of it.

### Wind down

[00:27:50] **Dara:** Okay, weekly wind down. What have you done Dan that's fun outside of work?

[00:27:55] **Daniel:** Oh, you've never said the word has to be fun before, I might have to think about this one.

[00:27:59] **Dara:** New year, new rules.

[00:28:00] **Daniel:** Well, I'll tell you it was fun, I had a friend of mine who moved out to the States, they came over to visit. So they came over for a short stint back in Brighton, and we got to hang out and I haven't seen them since, in three years, maybe three years. So it was really good to see them both come over, come visit, spend some time over here and just get to hang out with them, which is something feels like pre pandemic era kind of thing.

[00:28:24] **Dara:** That's so weird because I could have sworn that you had a very similar wind down before. Maybe there were different friends from a different place, I thought I heard this one before.

[00:28:34] **Daniel:** Are you calling me out?

[00:28:36] **Dara:** Well, yeah maybe, or maybe one of our listeners can say, hey, that was episode 42 and Dan talked about these friends before.

[00:28:42] **Daniel:** Jesus, well I have more than one friend and more than one friend in the States. Most recently, my friend from the States came over to get married, so maybe that was the one.

[00:28:50] **Dara:** Oh, maybe that's it, okay.

[00:28:51] **Daniel:** I mean, I'm not saying that you're wrong. I might have actually said this before also, these are the friends that live out in Seattle and we actually, the last time we went to go visit them was when I got engaged. So this was, you know, I've been married for a number of years now, so it's a long time ago I went to see them. They have been over every now and then, but this is the first time they came over and it felt like we could, you know, enjoy not having to not go anywhere and wear masks everywhere. So, this was a very pleasant experience. How about you Dara? What have you been doing since the last time we spoke? What have you been doing, and that is fun?

[00:29:21] **Dara:** I'm just recently back from holiday, so I mean, I did get back last week, but I'm still going to squeeze this in as my, as my fun wind down. So I was in New Zealand and Vietnam over christmas and new year. So it's really nice to get away and get some warm weather and the New Zealand part is seeing my partner Hannah's family. So that was, that's always really nice. She hadn't seen them since pre-covid, so, it was really nice to get to, to kind of see family and have Christmas over there. But I got back with a bang last week, jet lag and all the rest of it. So I'm only just really starting to feel semi-normal again now this week.

[00:29:56] **Daniel:** I still can't believe you went straight back to work the day after flying back from New Zealand, rookie.

[00:30:00] **Dara:** You would think I would've, I would know by now not to do that, but I seem to be unable to learn any lessons, so I'll probably do exactly the same thing next time and regret it just as much the next time.

[00:30:11] **Daniel:** It does sound fun, I do give you that.

[00:30:13] **Dara:** But that's it. That's probably my fun thing for the year.

[00:30:15] **Daniel:** Well Dara, how about we leave on a ChatGPT poem that I asked it to write for us.

[00:30:20] **Dara:** If you insist.

[00:30:21] **Daniel:** I do insist actually. So I asked ChatGPT to write us a poem about Google Optimize and the demise, so here we go.

[00:30:30] **Daniel:** Google Optimize our trusty friend, with you our websites did ascend. You helped us to test and to tweak, our online presence unique. You were young, just five years old, but in that time you made us bold. To try new things and take a chance, with data-driven marketing at our glance. But now you're gone and we must say, our hearts are heavy on this day. Through Optimizely and VWO, we will try to fill the voids you'll leave it's true. We'll always remember the impact you made, on how digital presence in every grade. Rest in peace dear Google Optimize, you'll be missed by many companies that's no surprise.

[00:31:07] **Dara:** That's pretty good. Apart from that one, strange kind of, not quite right bit at the end. It's actually surprisingly good. Is this just another step towards getting rid of me?

[00:31:17] **Daniel:** So this is my phased approach of replacing you with a bot Dara, yes.

### Outro

[00:31:21] **Dara:** That's it for this week, to hear more from me and Dan on GA4 and other analytics related topics, all our previous episodes are available in our archive at [measurelab.co.uk/podcast](https://www.measurelab.co.uk/podcast/?utm_medium=podcast&utm_source=transcript&utm_campaign=69), or you can simply use whatever app you're using right now to listen to this, to go back and listen to previous episodes.

[00:31:39] **Daniel:** And if you want to suggest a topic for something me and Dara should be talking about, or if you want to suggest a guest who we should be talking to, there's a [Google Form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMwfzg9TdNKeZYRxHci_y0D9up4EyAL5zNMYZNE9P_82fz3Q/viewform) in the show notes that you can fill out and leave us a note. Or alternatively, you can just email us at [podcast@measurelab.co.uk](mailto:podcast@measurelab.co.uk) to get in touch with us both directly.

[00:31:56] **Dara:** Our theme is from Confidential, you can find a link to their music in the show notes. So on behalf of Dan and I, thanks for listening, see you next time.