

# Blind Spots, Gaps, and Unexpected Traffic

## A (brief) history of the transition to Google Tag Manager and new approaches to improved MD-SOAR analytics

### TRANSITION TIMELINE

In late 2015, David Dahl -- director of CLAS -- initiated a project to migrate MDSOAR, the USMAI shared DSPACE platform, from a generic Google Analytics installation to a Google Tag Manager instance

- January-May 2016:** Initial development for migration to Google Tag Manager
- May 24, 2016:** Completed shift to Google Tag Manager
- May 27, 2016:** Lingering issues resolved, completing migration
- June 1, 2016:** Ongoing questions about metric accuracy, bot traffic excluded in attempt to isolate problem
- June - November 2016:** Continued research into "missing metrics" uncovered documented problem with native DSPACE configuration
- January 2017:** Began participation in the RAMP initiative

### PROBLEMS, NEW AND PERSISTENT

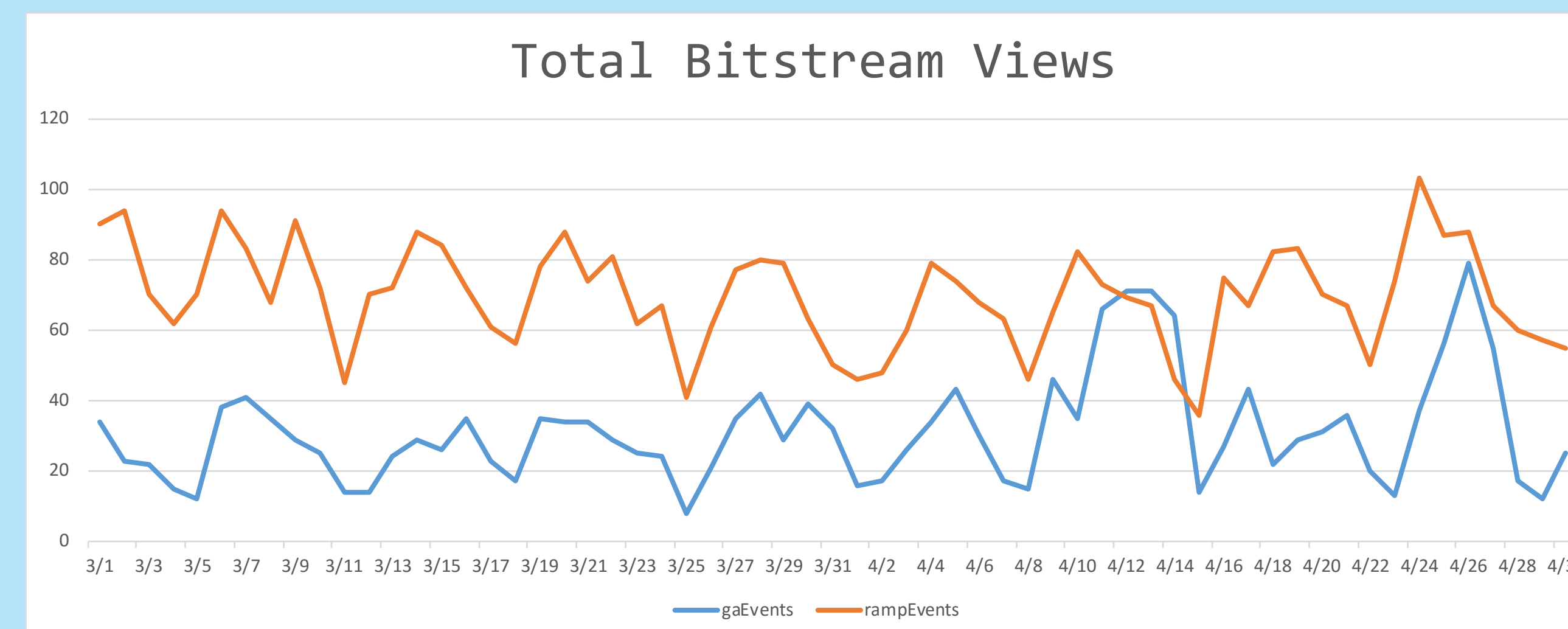
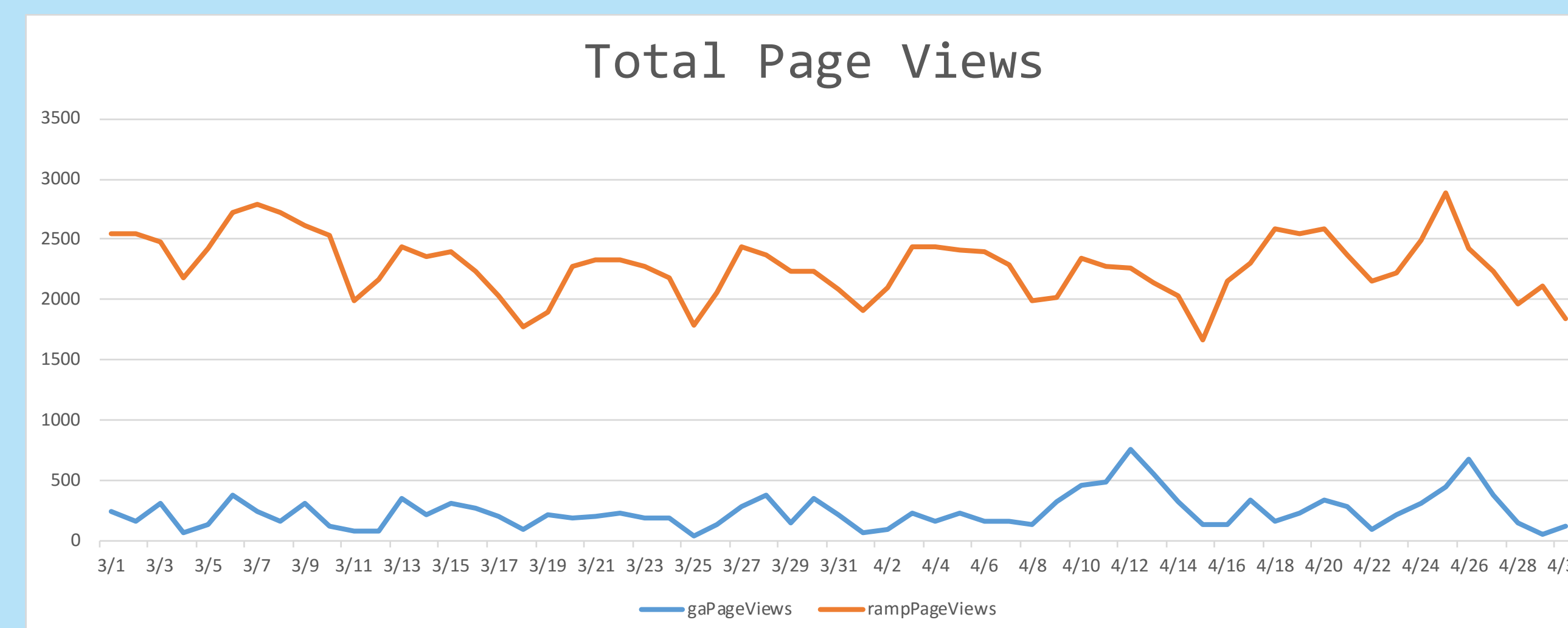
- Miscounting download metrics:** A known problem for DSPACE, the nature of the document viewer the allows users to access the web-hosted bitstream prevents the inclusion of the necessary Google code snippet that tracks page views, thereby omitting any user that accesses the bitstream via an index site or search engine.
- How many views is it anyways?:** In order to help sift through the huge piles of data collected by current analytical methodologies, Google attempts to intelligently limit what is collected as a real user or page view. But without any comparative analysis, it is difficult to assess the accuracy of Google user and page view metrics.
- Big Ugly Data Pile:** As a shared consortial DSPACE instance, differentiating between campus- and community-specific activities such as page views and downloads is exceedingly difficult, leading to a large undifferentiated metric count that fails to highlight actionable data to any of our consortial partners. Lack of easy-to-capture hierarchical relationships between collections and their constituent records confounds the capture of campus-specific data.
- Confusing dashboards, confused users:** User complaints have indicated that while access to the Google Analytics dashboard has been granted to participating campuses, data offered through the dashboards is not easily understood, leading to discomfort and lack of use. The Reporting & Analytics Subgroup held a Google Analytics Forum (April 2017) to encourage experimentation with and exploration of GA data.

### RAMP

A collaborative research initiative through the University of Montana, the University of New Mexico, and OCLC, the Repository Analytics & Metrics Portal (RAMP, <http://ramp.montana.edu/>) is developing an alternate analytics approach for DSPACE-based repository platforms. By adopting a custom approach that implements a Google Search Console approach, RAMP hopes to present a more holistic picture of platform usage and bitstream access.

Both the University of Maryland (DRUM) and the USMAI consortium (MDSOAR) joined the initiative as a pilot test group in January 2017, along with thirteen additional institutions in the US and Canada. During this initial phase, we are gathering data sets on both general page views, general user statistics (i.e. country of origin, device type), and bitstream access. Once the pilot phase is completed, we will perform a comparative analysis of all available data, produce recommendations for future analytics approaches, and provide the research team with feedback on the usability of the RAMP dashboard.

Below is a brief comparative assessment of data from March and April 2017, highlighting initial disparities between Google Tag Manager and RAMP data.



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