

# Website incident report: cookie banner/analytics integration failure causes attribution outage

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INCIDENT KEY DETAILS	
<b>Reported by</b> <i>Name and contact</i>	Alex Martinez, Growth Analyst Marketing Operations alex.martinez@company.com (555) 555-2198
<b>Owner</b> <i>Name and contact</i>	Dana Kim, Web Engineering Manager Digital Platform Team dana.kim@company.com (555) 555-3321
<b>Date and time detected</b>	Mar 18, 2025 9:26 AM
<b>Date and time resolved</b>	Mar 20, 2025 2:15 PM
<b>Date of report</b> <i>Creation date</i>	Mar 24, 2025
<b>Systems affected</b>	Google Analytics 4, Google Tag Manager, OneTrust cookie consent platform, internal attribution dashboards.
<b>Duration</b>	Approximately 33 days from initial configuration change to confirmed restoration of attribution data.
<b>Demo URLs</b>	https://www.example.com https://www.example.com/pricing https://www.example.com/contact
<b>Related ticket(s)</b> <i>Paste URLs</i>	https://jira.example.com/browse/WEB-4182 https://jira.example.com/browse/MKTG-992
<b>Monitoring alert</b> <i>Paste URL</i>	N/A – No automated system monitored attribution integrity.
<b>Severity</b> <i>Choose one</i>	<del>Level 1</del>   <del>Level 2</del>   <del>Level 3</del> <a href="#">Severity levels are detailed below.</a>
<b>Communication</b> <i>Optional</i>	Internal incident summary posted to Growth and Marketing Slack channels on Mar 18, 2026.

## Incident summary

A cookie consent configuration change suppressed analytics and attribution tags from firing after users accepted cookies. Site traffic, forms and lead capture continued to function normally, but marketing attribution data was not recorded for more than one month. The issue was discovered during routine growth reporting and required several additional days after deployment to confirm full data recovery due to inherent reporting latency.

## Detailed timeline

Feb 19, 2025 – Cookie banner configuration updated during privacy compliance refresh.

Feb 19, 2025 to Mar 18, 2025 – Attribution data silently unavailable.

Mar 18, 2025 9:26 AM – Growth analyst detects attribution gap during monthly report review.

Mar 18, 2025 10:30 AM Mar 18, 2026 10:30 Mar 18, 2025 9:26 AM Mar 19, 2026 – Root cause isolated to consent rule misconfiguration.

Mar 20, 2025 2:15 PM – Corrected consent configuration deployed to production.

Mar 20, 2025 to Mar 24, 2025 – No real-time confirmation available due to attribution latency.

Mar 18, 2025 9:26 AM Mar 24, 2026 – Attribution data confirmed flowing again through downstream reporting systems.

## Detection and escalation

The issue was detected manually by the Growth team during monthly reporting. It was escalated to Web Engineering and Marketing Operations within one hour of discovery.

## Impact assessment

User experience, site availability and lead capture were unaffected. All form submissions and revenue activity continued normally. However, attribution data for all marketing channels was unavailable for 33 days, impairing campaign performance reporting, ROI analysis and executive dashboards. No personal data was lost. The impact was limited to attribution metadata only.

## Immediate response and containment

Tag Manager firing rules and consent logic were reviewed immediately after escalation. Controlled test traffic was generated to validate browser-level tag execution. Due to compliance constraints, consent



logic could not be bypassed in production. Because attribution systems do not provide real-time validation, no immediate production confirmation was available after deployment.

## Root cause analysis

A revised consent rule introduced during the privacy refresh required an additional consent state that was never set for most users. As a result, analytics and attribution tags were suppressed even after explicit cookie acceptance.

## Resolution and recovery

Consent rules were corrected and redeployed on Mar 20, 2026. Because attribution confirmation is subject to system latency, recovery could not be verified in real time. Full data flow was confirmed on Mar 24, 2026 through downstream reporting validation.

## Corrective and preventive actions

Joint QA review by Web Engineering and Marketing Operations is now required for all consent or analytics changes. Attribution validation was added to the release checklist. Weekly attribution health checks were added to the growth reporting workflow.

## Evidence and references

[GA4 debug session logs](#)

[Tag Manager version history](#)

[Consent platform configuration diff](#)

[Growth reporting screenshots showing attribution gap and delayed recovery confirmation](#)

## Regulatory concerns

No regulatory reporting required. No personal data exposure occurred.

## Lessons learned

Attribution failures can persist undetected while lead flow remains healthy. Consent and analytics integrations require shared ownership and explicit post-release validation.

## Post-incident review and approval

Reviewed by: Dana Kim, Web Engineering Manager, *Mar 25, 2025*



## Severity levels

*The following are defined incident levels for company.com*

### Level 1 Critical

Complete outage or major data loss. Core site, app or API is unavailable for most users. Immediate response required. Executive and communications teams may need to be notified.

**Suggested or required action:** Create a Priority 1 incident in Jira immediately. Initiate rollback, failover or traffic isolation without delay. Maintain continuous monitoring until full service is restored. Prepare internal and public communications as required.

**Suggested or required contact(s):** Notify in order: direct supervisor, on-call PagerDuty engineering leader, Web Engineering Manager, CTO. Add Legal and Communications if data exposure, security risk or public notice is involved.

### Level 2 High

Partial outage or severe functional degradation. Key features are broken but limited service remains available. Rapid response required. Stakeholders probably need to be notified.

**Suggested or required action:** Create a Priority 2 incident in Jira. Assign an engineering owner within 30 minutes. Deploy hotfix or configuration rollback as required. Post status updates to stakeholders every two to four hours until resolution.

**Suggested or required contact(s):** Notify in order: direct supervisor, on-call PagerDuty engineering leader, Web Engineering Manager. Notify involved stakeholders as appropriate.

### Level 3 Moderate

Minor service disruption, performance issue or non-critical bug. Limited user impact. Can be handled during normal operating hours. Notifications may be optional.

**Suggested or required action:** Create a standard incident or bug ticket in Jira within one business day. Schedule investigation and fix through normal sprint or maintenance workflow.

**Suggested or required contact(s):** Replace with direct supervisor, team lead or assigned developer, as dictated by organization policy.



# How to write an incident report

*Edit the following default text to reflect the policy, style and brand of your organization.*  
Use this guide to ensure reports are clear, factual and useful for review and prevention.

## Be objective

Write in plain, neutral language. Record facts only. Do not assign blame or speculate.

## Write chronologically

Document events in the order they occurred, with timestamps where possible.

## Be specific

Use exact system names, URLs, error messages and measurable impact.

## Separate facts from analysis

Record impact and actions separately from confirmed root cause.

## Document actions in real time

Log containment and recovery steps as they occur, not from memory.

## Use full identification

List full names and roles for people and full names for systems on first reference.

## Include evidence

Link directly to logs, alerts, tickets, screenshots and related files.

## Document communications

Record who was notified, when and how. Link to any status updates.

## Avoid hindsight bias

Record what was known at the time decisions were made.

## Review for accuracy

Verify dates, times, actions and links before final submission.



\* Note: This is a simulated document. All names and contacts are fictional. No actual pixels or deal attributions were harmed in the making of this demo.



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