Introduction

Piwik PRO and Matomo (formerly Piwik) have a shared history. Some of our employees contributed code for the open-source Piwik project. Early on Piwik PRO provided enterprise-level support and premium features on top of those open source foundations. However, in 2016 our paths diverged. We’re now two separate organizations, each with its own plans and guiding principles.

We realize that although for us this seems obvious, it might not be from an outsider’s perspective.

That’s why with this article, we’d like to explain as much as possible regarding the differences between us and Matomo (formerly Piwik) – both as companies and as products.

2018 was pretty exciting for us. Last year, among other things, we’ve been recognized as 20th fastest growing technology company in Central Europe in the „Deloitte Technology Fast 50“ Ranking and certified under the ISO 27001 standard. Here you can read our year-end roundup: Piwik PRO 2018 Year in Review.
Piwik PRO vs Matomo (Piwik) - what’s the difference?

**Piwik PRO** was established in 2013 and since then it has been providing an enterprise-level platform along with support for corporate clients and government organizations. The company has 100+ employees across multiple teams based in the EU and US, dedicated to customer success, technical support, product development, marketing and sales.

Piwik PRO is a sister company of **Clearcode** - a leader in the development of MarTech and AdTech software.

**Matomo** (founded in 2007), on the other hand, is an open-source project. It was formerly known as “Piwik” until January 2018 when it rebranded. See [our official blog post explaining](https://www.clearcode.com/blog/2018/1/29/piwik-pro-rebranding) what the name change means for Piwik PRO.

The team consists of a dozen of part-time contributors and an even smaller core team working on the product development. The same people who stand behind it are also the founders of InnoCraft - a consultancy providing premium plugins and services for Matomo as well as a cloud service for the hosted version of the software. InnoCraft has approximately 5 team members (according to LinkedIn), mostly based in New Zealand. Within the last few months both businesses were merged into one and now appear under the same name (Matomo).

**Piwik PRO** uses a fork of Piwik open-source software (similarly to RedHat using the Linux kernel and multiple open source tools), however we currently seamlessly integrate a part of open source Piwik in our proprietary platform via APIs. Moreover, Piwik PRO controls all the changes to the code used in its Analytics Suite and since 2016 has been maintaining and developing its own fork of “Piwik” alongside the proprietary modules of Analytics Suite.

We hope that this explains the business relationship between companies. Now, let’s cover the functionalities of each tool.
Piwik PRO vs. Matomo (former Piwik): How do the products compare?

In our opinion, differences in the size and scale of activities of Matomo and Piwik PRO translate directly into their target groups and characteristics. Below we list some arguments to back up this statement.

The range of topics to discuss is very broad. That’s why, to make this piece as digestible as possible, we divided it into six parts covering different aspects of the products:

- Variety of tools and features
- Performance and reliability
- Data visualization and comparison
- Tracking and reporting on traffic sources
- Support and SLA
- GDPR and data privacy, and
- Data Security

Let’s get right into it!

Piwik PRO vs Matomo: The most important differences

The first important difference is the number of products provided by each company. With Piwik PRO, you’ll get a fully-integrated Analytics Suite, consisting of 6 products:

- Analytics (including Web, App, Product and Intranet Analytics)
- Custom Reports
- Tag Manager
- Customer Data Platform (CDP)
- On-site Retargeting, and
- GDPR Consent Manager
The modules can be purchased separately or in a set. This means that Piwik PRO Analytics Suite offers wide possibilities for collecting and activating data. In addition to standard analytics, it can also:

- perform data integration across marketing, sales and customer success tools and platforms
- create single customer views
- map the customer journey
- create audiences
- activate collected data through on-site retargeting and paid campaigns

All features include respect for visitor privacy, data protection regulations (including GDPR) and internal data security policies.

If you want to **know how our products work together to deliver tangible value**, be sure to check this blog post out: 4 Sound Reasons to Choose a Digital Marketing Platform (+Use Cases).

**Matomo** is an analytics and tag management system.

Also, **Matomo’s Custom Reports** are not a separate module, but a paid plugin based on the same database management system and UI as Matomo Analytics.

As for **Piwik PRO**, last year we decided to develop Custom Reports as a separate product with its own backend and functionalities. Equipped with a new engine, the module:

- significantly reduced pre-computing time needed to process data (you can read about it [here](#))
- made our analytics more scalable and efficient (in particular being capable of handling over 1 billion events per month)
• improved the overall usability of our product (the user interface now includes a simple drag and drop editor allowing you to mix and combine metrics, dimensions and events to create and filter reports)

• increased the variety of data visualization methods (including nested tables and numerous types of line and bar charts)

All of that allowed us to free ourselves (and our customers!) from some reporting limitations of our standard web analytics instance.
Performance and reliability

Now, let’s address the performance and reliability of each platform.

As we’ve mentioned earlier, last year we’ve developed a powerful addition to our stack – a.k.a Custom Reports.

Piwik PRO Custom Report’s backend is powered by ClickHouse, a column-oriented database management system, which can generate reports in real-time and instantly process each query.

Matomo, on the other hand, due to its row-oriented architecture, needs some additional time to pre-process data and generate the reports.

These differences in performance have a direct impact on the efficiency of your own work. Particularly when you decide to...

Build segments

To test the differences, we set up trial accounts on Piwik PRO Cloud and Matomo Cloud.

We’ve implemented both tools on one website to compare their performance in the same environment.

First, we used both platforms to create a segment of mobile users. The data scope was a single day (03.12.2018) and approximately 2400 visits. We started creating reports at 10AM. The whole operation took us about 10 minutes.

If you want to learn more about capabilities of Piwik PRO Custom Reports, be sure to check this blog post out.
In the case of Piwik PRO Custom Reports, the data was available after just few seconds:

As for Matomo, instead of data, we've encountered the following message:

“These reports have no data, because the Segment you requested has not yet been processed by the system. Data for this Segment should become available in a few hours when processing completes.”
Create custom reports

In the second test, we used the tools to create a custom report showing the visits segmented by traffic sources and filtered by smartphone users. The test was performed at the same time as the previous one.

In Piwik PRO Custom Reports, the report generated almost immediately:

![Graph showing data]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source / Medium</th>
<th>Entries</th>
<th>Average revenue</th>
<th>Sum of revenue</th>
<th>Goal conversion rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>google / organic</td>
<td>1154</td>
<td>$398</td>
<td>$796</td>
<td>0.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct / direct</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>$219.29</td>
<td>$877.14</td>
<td>3.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.ceneo.pl / referral</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>$183.17</td>
<td>$549.5</td>
<td>2.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.facebook.com / referral</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skapiec.pl / referral</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>$338</td>
<td>$338</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And with Matomo, we had to wait for the data to be processed:

Traffic Sources by Device

There is no data for this report. As the report was created or updated only recently, it may take a few hours for the data to become available when you are viewing today's reports. The report data for dates before this report was created won't become available.

This report has the following filter applied: Device type is "smartphone".
Both Matomo’s reports were ready around 5PM.

**Conclusion:** In our opinion, the speed of creating reports is one of the most important differences between products. In the case of Matomo, you need to wait quite a while until analytics data reaches the database. Piwik PRO lets you access the data on the spot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The speed of creating the reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matomo Cloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to a few hours*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In our test, the report generation time was about 7 hours.

**Data visualization & comparison**

Another issue is the flexibility in compiling and presenting data. It’s crucial for analysts and marketers to have a vast array of visualization features to choose from in order to display the data in a clear and informative manner.

In the case of Piwik PRO Web Analytics, you’ll be able to take advantage of line, pie, bar and cloud charts.

As for Piwik PRO Custom Reports, it provides you with two types of charts, line and column, that are customizable and able to create:

- **Clustered column charts** – showing values of multiple category groups
- **Grouped bar charts** – letting you compare values of multiple categories across multiple dimensions
- **Stacked bar charts** – visualizing traffic composition depending on the device type used by the user – in other words putting the whole custom report into a single chart
- **Multi line charts** – especially useful for comparing data from specific time periods and values over time
What’s particularly important is that Custom Reports are built around metrics, dimensions, segments and filters you can choose freely, contrary to the predefined sets you’re limited to in standard web analytics reports. Thanks to this, data visualizations are customizable and can show more relevant data in one view:
Matomo Analytics provides you with the same set of visualizations as in Piwik PRO Analytics. And with Matomo Custom Reports you’ll get to choose between other graph types such as:

- **Table**: showing the report data in a typical Matomo (Piwik) data table
- **Evolution**: a graph showing the evolution for the selected metrics over time (also known as a line graph)
- Plus, the visualizations from standard Matomo analytics

However, in many cases the graphs will need additional time for pre-calculation. It means that if you want to access past data, you’ll need to invalidate the past historical reports so they can be re-processed from the logs.

**Segments and timeframes comparison**

With Piwik PRO you can freely compare various sets of values against others. The feature proves especially helpful in the analysis of behavioral data. Thanks to it, you can clearly see the differences between segments of visitors, for instance:

- People from specific regions of the world
- Users from various age groups
- Visitors at particular stages of the customer journey

The tool also lends itself for examining performance of certain segments in different time periods, eg. conversion rates year to year, SEO traffic month to month etc.
In Piwik PRO, you can compare this data in an informative and easy to digest line chart:

You won’t be able to do any of those things in Matomo, as the product doesn’t give you an ability to compare the data from different time frames or segments (not to mention comparing segments over time).
We know that this is a lot of information to digest at once. This overview chart might help:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Matomo Analytics</th>
<th>Matomo Custom Reports Plugin</th>
<th>Piwik PRO Web Analytics</th>
<th>Piwik PRO Custom Reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nested table</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line chart</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi line charts</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar graph</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pie chart</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud chart</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clustered column charts</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouped bar charts</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacked bar chart</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customizable graph templates</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filtering the charts</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing time periods</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing segments</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated integration with</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data visualization tools (i.e.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looker, Tableau)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tracking and reporting traffic sources

One of the most important functionalities of analytics from a marketer’s standpoint is reporting on traffic sources.

In Matomo, there is an open plugin called Marketing Campaigns Reporting. It allows you to see the following data:

What’s significant is that the most important dimension for traffic reporting – source/medium – is available only for campaign reports. It means that you won’t be able to use it in reports on traffic from particular browsers or websites – also important for examining your traffic sources.
In Piwik PRO Custom Reports on the other hand, you can create a report with your own set of metrics and dimensions, so adding a source/medium dimension to the above-mentioned reports (or virtually any other report) won’t be any problem:

![A sample view from the report editor in Piwik PRO Custom Reports](image)

Also quite helpful: the report can be enriched with a multi line chart showing you the effectiveness of traffic sources over time. Thanks to the fact that the table can be nested, the information is easy to arrange in a user-friendly manner.
For instance, if you click on Campaigns dimension, you’ll see the following data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source / Medium</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Bounce rate</th>
<th>Average page views in session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adwords / ppc</td>
<td>69,163</td>
<td>78,261</td>
<td>78,15%</td>
<td>1,45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google / cpc</td>
<td>11,105</td>
<td>12,515</td>
<td>77,74%</td>
<td>1,48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook / cpc</td>
<td>5,885</td>
<td>7,652</td>
<td>76,22%</td>
<td>1,35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And as we mentioned earlier, the metrics and dimensions visible in the report can be matched to your personal preferences.
Support and SLA

Without deep knowledge of the product, you won’t be able to exploit its full potential. And without dedicated technical support, it’s possible that your inquiries will get stuck in a long queue of pending tickets with queries from other users.

So it’s crucial that you be able to sign an SLA (service level agreement) with your analytics vendor. An SLA ensures that the support staff will be available to handle all problems and questions within an agreed upon timeframe.

In order to speed up onboarding users of the new platform and prevent any potential problems or misunderstandings, Piwik PRO offers the following to all its clients:

**Premium User Training and Customer Success Program** – provides you with a dedicated Customer Success Manager that will assist you in defining your needs and translating them into actionable advice for using the platform.

**Detailed documentation** – provides detailed infrastructure guidelines to ensure optimal product performance in the case of an on-premises installation.

**Enterprise support and onboarding** – helps set up and configure your web analytics instance, including an SLA ensuring all your needs are met as you use the product. Such service can be provided on-site in cooperation with your internal team.

**Dedicated technical project coordinator** – gives you a first point of contact in case of emergencies or web analytics performance issues.

**24/7 monitoring and incident handling** – monitors platform performance and data collection processes around-the-clock plus backup management.

Where relevant, these services can be provided during both American and European business hours.

As for Matomo, depending on the plan (Essential, Business, Enterprise or self-hosted On-Premise version), you’ll receive email support, a dedicated account manager or community support (a forum).
GDPR and data privacy

The next important issue is GDPR and its consequences for data processing. We take pride in a fact that our solution has been audited and found compliant by a top global consulting firm. Our platform not only meets the privacy standards laid out in GDPR but helps organizations fulfill the obligations arising from the regulation.

One of the most important among them is that every website owner should collect informed, active, unambiguous and granular consents before they start tracking personal data.

In this situation you have two options to choose from:

- Apply a mechanism to acquire, store and manage records of consents and all possible data subject requests resulting from the fact that you process personal data, or
- Get rid of any traces of personal data and free yourself from the demands described above.

Here you can find some more information on managing user consents under GDPR:

*A Practical Guide to Acquiring Consent in the Age of GDPR*

Download free whitepaper
Below, we describe how these responsibilities are addressed by Matomo and Piwik PRO.

**Gathering consents and data subject requests**

Let’s say you decide to collect personal data.

In the case of **Matomo**, if you want to collect consents, you’ll have to implement the code of the privacy notice mechanism into your website, following the instructions provided by Matomo. In practice you’ll need to have developer-like skills to manage the task.

What’s more, Matomo:

- doesn’t store records of collected consents
- doesn’t support consent collection on behalf of third parties (for instance, marketing or customer management tools you’re using)
- doesn’t let you see and manage data subject requests from one place

Which means that you’ll have to deal with these issues on your own or find an external vendor who develops dedicated software.

On the other hand, in **Piwik PRO**, you can take advantage of **GDPR Consent Manager** – a dedicated tool for creating consent forms as well as collecting, managing and storing both records of consent decisions and data subject requests.
Thanks to the intuitive editor, you’ll be able to configure everything without touching a piece of code. Also, the tool will allow you to see the most important statistics regarding user consents and data subject requests:

### Decisions about consent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Viewed consent form</th>
<th>Full consent</th>
<th>Any consent</th>
<th>No decision</th>
<th>No consent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Viewed consent form</td>
<td>35 233</td>
<td>1 889</td>
<td>1 968</td>
<td>32 595</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A sample report showing decisions about consent over time

Want to learn more about the product?

Visit [this page](#) to get to know the ins and outs of our GDPR Consent Manager.
Anonymizing the data

As we’ve said before, the other option is to erase any trace of personal data from your databases. Without personal data, you won’t have to ask for user consent in order to collect data. However, you have to be aware that this is easier said than done, because GDPR sets a very high bar when it comes to anonymization.

In the case of Matomo, data anonymization process is based on several methods, including **device fingerprinting**:

As we can read on Matomo’s website:

> It is not clear for us yet if all cookies are considered equal under GDPR. At this stage it is too early to make a definite decision.

> Did you know? Matomo lets you optionally disable the creation of cookies by adding an extra line of code to your tracking code see below.

> [...]  

> If Matomo cannot set cookies, it will use a technique called Fingerprint. It is based on several metadata such as the operating system, browser, browser plugins, IP address, browser language; just to name a few to identify a unique visitor. As this feature is less accurate than the one using cookies, the number of visitors and visits will be affected.

However, Article 4 of GDPR defines personal data as any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). The definition not only covers all sorts of online identifiers (eg. networks’ IP address, device ID or cookie identifier) but also the combinations of browser characteristics that fingerprinting relies on (see: **Recital 30**).

And since the information collected using fingerprinting allows you to identify users between sessions, it’s considered personal identifier. Hence, this technique doesn’t meet the data anonymization standards.
In practice this means that you still need to obtain user consent in order to process data collected through fingerprinting. Otherwise, you won’t fulfill the obligations imposed by GDPR.

In Piwik PRO on the other hand, the data anonymization feature provides you with fully anonymized data and allows you to escape the obligation to collect records of GDPR consents.

In case someone disregards your request for consent or just withdraws their consent, the UIA ('user is anonymous' parameter) is enabled.

Let’s see how it works. When anonymous data collection is enabled for a visitor, the ‘UIA’ is added to the tracker and Piwik PRO instance settings are the following for that visitors:

- Geolocation is fully or partially disabled. Depending on the instance settings Piwik PRO will record just the country information or nothing at all. An associated web server will see the same masked IP address.
- No “fingerprinting” data is used to identify returning users. Characteristics of the visitor’s device or browser (operating system, browser information, language settings, etc.) are not compared in an attempt to identify users.
- One cookie identifier (“Visitor ID”) is stored in the visitor’s browser. This cookie’s duration is set to 30 minutes, after which it is deleted automatically by the browser. Therefore the online identifier describes a visit and not a visitor.

This kind of data anonymization allows you to collect at least some information about user behavior (e.g. page views, conversions and time spent on the site) without asking for consent.

What’s more?

If during the session the user will eventually decide to consent, you’ll be able to merge anonymous and personal data about them into a single record (that wouldn’t happen in the case of Matomo).
Data Security

Last but not least – data security.

In Piwik PRO, we take this matter seriously. That’s why we’ve made sure that our commitment to data security is demonstrated by our partnerships and by external audits of our company & our product.

Below we describe the most important of them:

Secure infrastructure

Piwik PRO can be deployed on your own infrastructure, in a private cloud, at a third-party data center or on our secure servers. As a security-conscious provider, we exclusively partner with select Microsoft Azure data centers, located in the Netherlands, US and Germany. Thanks to this, we can provide our customers with an infrastructure that is:

- ISO 27001-certified
- GDPR-compliant
- Fully redundant
- Ensures 99% SLA

ISO-27001 Certification

Another expression of our approach to data security is the ISO-27001 certification we achieved last year.

The certification confirms that as a company dedicated to data protection, Piwik PRO operates in accordance with the strictest data security policies. The scope of the protection covers all information processed in Piwik PRO, in every form and in every place where we operate.

Here you can read more about the certification: We’re Officially ISO 27001-certified!
LogicalTrust security audit

As for the safety of our product, we’re proud to announce that Piwik PRO Analytics Suite has successfully passed an audit from LogicalTrust, an experienced, impartial auditor that specializes in IT security. The audit aimed to uncover any potential vulnerabilities and security deficiencies of our platform, with the focus on a third-party attempt to break the system’s security.

Thanks to the above-described certifications and partnerships, data sensitive institutions like banks or healthcare organizations no longer need to conduct their own compliance assessment when buying our products.

In the case of Matomo, companies from these sectors will still have to carry out their own audits to assess whether the level of data security provided by the platform and company is sufficient in their case.
Piwik PRO vs Matomo (Piwik): Which one should you choose?

As you can see, the differences between the products offered by Piwik PRO and Matomo are significant. In summary, the most important of them are:

- The number of tools and variety of use cases supported by each vendor
- The scalability of the platforms and speed at which reports are generated
- The variety of visualizations available and ways to manipulate and compare data
- The availability of SLAs, onboarding and maintenance
- The approach to data security and privacy, including GDPR requirements

All in all, we believe that Matomo will be a great fit for small businesses, start-ups and bloggers who also have a fairly high level of analytical and coding knowledge. Piwik PRO, on the other hand, due to its complex functionalities, efficiency and level of customer service (but also price, we’re aware that it’s an important factor to consider) is a platform better suited to businesses operating on a larger scale and wanting to find a partner that will be able to match their demands.

We hope that we managed to address most of your questions regarding the differences between Piwik PRO and Matomo (Piwik). However, if you still feel like you need some more answers – feel free to contact us anytime. Our team will gladly dispel any of your doubts!

Would you like to learn more?

We know your business requires a personalized approach. Been there, done that. We have implemented customized web analytics and tag management solutions for dozens of organizations of all sizes.

Schedule a FREE demo

Learn more about Piwik PRO Analytics
About Piwik PRO

AdTech and MarTech experts founded Piwik PRO in 2013 due to the lack of an analytics stack that was both high performance and privacy-friendly. Our suite of products marries privacy by design, flexible hosting and full data ownership with enterprise-level features and support.

The Piwik PRO team consists of seasoned analytics experts and engineers who have advised on and delivered a wide range of successful implementations. Acting as your technology partner, we share our expertise, tailor our products and services to match your particular goals, and support you from start to finish.

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