

Google Merchandise Customer Journey & Insights

Benny Frisella

University of Texas at Dallas

Introduction to Web Analytics

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The Google Store initially launched in 2005 as an internal employee-only store, but by popular demand, opened to the public in 2015. The store offers Google and Google subsidiary branded products like smartphones, laptops, notebooks, water bottles, clothes and accessories. This report aims to analyze the customer journey through the Google Merchandise Store (www.googlemerchandisestore.com) to gain actionable insights that may improve the user experience and increase key performance metrics. This analysis of Quarter 3 (Q3) 2024 (July 1 - September 30), is meant to find areas of improvement and recommend adjustments. Key areas to optimize include strengthening SEO efforts to boost organic search performance, targeting high-value regions like California, New York, and Texas, and improving the mobile experience to minimize abandonment rates. Additionally, the findings suggest optimizing campaigns for the 18-24-year-old male demographic and enhancing engagement in the 35-44-year-old females to increase conversions and revenue.

Methods

Where are they coming from?

According to Semrush in Figure 1, Q3 saw above-average Paid/Organic Traffic at the beginning of the quarter but continued to trend down to their averages as they have consistently done over the last two years. Figure 1 below shows the highest Traffic numbers in Q3.



Figure 1. Organic/Paid Traffic over time. SEMrush

Of the dwindling users accessing the Google Store, Google Analytics 4 (GA4) reports in Q3 show **323,179 Sessions**. Here we're only interested in *Engaged Sessions*, defined as, "The number of sessions that lasted longer than 10 seconds, or had a key event, or had 2 or more screen or page views," as this metric gives us a better snapshot of customer behavior and implicitly incorporates bounce rate. Specifically, the *Engagement Rate* (a derived percentage of Engaged Sessions ÷ Sessions) is displayed in Figure 2 below, showing sources of: Organic Shopping, Email, Organic Search and Referral achieve the highest Engagement Rates of 90%, 78%, 71% and 70%, respectively.

Session primary...Channel Group) ▾ +		↓ Sessions	Engaged sessions	Engagement rate	Average engagement time per session	Events per session
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Total	323,179 100% of total	177,964 100% of total	55.07% Avg 0%	57s Avg 0%	14.11 Avg 0%
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 Direct	211,408	101,000	47.77%	47s	11.74
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 Organic Search	61,227	43,664	71.31%	1m 04s	14.74
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 Referral	20,371	14,336	70.37%	1m 49s	22.66
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 Email	8,786	6,851	77.98%	2m 07s	25.54
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5 Unassigned	7,046	376	5.34%	1m 04s	42.02
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Cross-network	4,769	3,574	74.94%	1m 36s	21.47
<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Paid Search	3,746	1,269	33.88%	40s	10.80
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Organic Social	1,684	1,302	77.32%	1m 28s	19.42
<input type="checkbox"/>	9 Organic Shopping	781	702	89.88%	1m 08s	15.46
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 Paid Other	427	180	42.15%	28s	8.88

Figure 2. Traffic Acquisition From Different Sources. GA4

Among all sources, **Sessions from Referrals and Organic Search stand out with the most potential for increased interactions as both have the highest Average Engagement Time per Session relative to the number of sessions.**

Who are they?

As the customer journey is about better understanding the customer, it may be of use to have some context about the customers visiting the site. In this section, we'll quickly dive into customer demographics to possibly combine this information with other insights to create optimal future adjustments. As seen below in Figure 3, about 70% of the GMS's customers in Q3 were from the United States.



Figure 3. Total Active Users. Darker Colors Represent More Active Users. GA4

Specifically, most customers are from California, New York, Ontario, and Texas, respectively. Diving deeper, **Figure 4 below shows California is leaps and bounds the biggest driver in Engagement as California has the most Active/New users while also taking the top spot in each of the four Engagement attributes below.**

Region	Active users	New users	Engaged sessions	Engagement rate	Engaged sessions per active user	Average engagement time per active user	Event count	Key events	User key event rate	Total revenue
	100% of total	100% of total	100% of total	Avg 0%	Avg 0%	Avg 0%	100% of total	100% of total	Avg 0%	100% of total
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Total	205,984	194,480	177,964	55.07%	0.86	1m 30s	4,559,713	353,998.00	30.44%	\$751,442.52
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 California	29,978	25,675	35,412	68.02%	1.18	2m 49s	1,130,286	103,678.00	49.03%	\$222,695.41
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 (not set)	13,059	12,684	6,479	40.58%	0.50	33s	135,401	7,332.00	15.41%	\$4,665.20
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 New York	12,864	11,491	9,903	55.2%	0.77	1m 19s	260,065	21,480.00	29.24%	\$59,852.49
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 Ontario	10,575	9,730	6,411	39.65%	0.61	45s	152,819	8,291.00	14.54%	\$25,266.72
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 Texas	8,280	7,519	7,087	55.84%	0.86	1m 40s	197,975	17,354.00	33.08%	\$45,730.91
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6 Florida	6,580	5,952	4,340	47.25%	0.66	58s	103,383	7,420.00	23.84%	\$14,546.15
<input type="checkbox"/> 7 Virginia	5,801	5,198	4,439	50.87%	0.77	1m 28s	123,147	11,438.00	30.81%	\$37,629.38
<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Illinois	5,124	4,614	4,547	56.71%	0.89	1m 51s	132,838	11,843.00	33.35%	\$42,389.78
<input type="checkbox"/> 9 Washington	4,876	4,230	5,033	64.48%	1.03	2m 27s	165,345	15,295.00	42.43%	\$37,049.09
<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Quebec	4,376	3,967	2,058	35.97%	0.47	25s	41,882	1,776.00	9.41%	\$2,774.70

Figure 4. Active/New Users. User Engagement. Total Revenue by Region. GA4

As **California** is the most populated state in the U.S., it's assumed that they would bring in the most Total Revenue, but the highlighted box in Figure 4 shows that the state brings in **\$222,695.41**, which is **more than double the two regions with the next highest Total Revenues, New York and Texas, combined.**

California shows the highest potential for increased conversion rates with its highest active/new users, greatest engagement, and dominant Total Revenue.

Quickly diving further into demographics, it can be seen in Figure 5 below that most *Active users* are young, between 18-24 years old and 25-34 years old with a linear descent as the customer gets older. Interestingly, the 65+ age group is more active than the 55-64 group, most likely because they have more time after retirement.

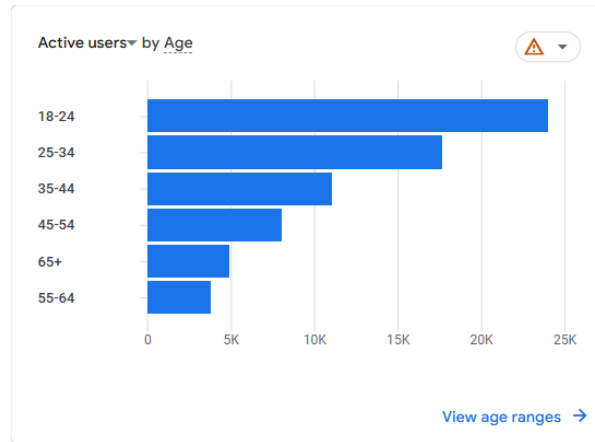


Figure 5. Age Demographics of Active Users. GA4

A quick glance at Figure 6 below shows that *males* were more active than *females* in Q3 2024.

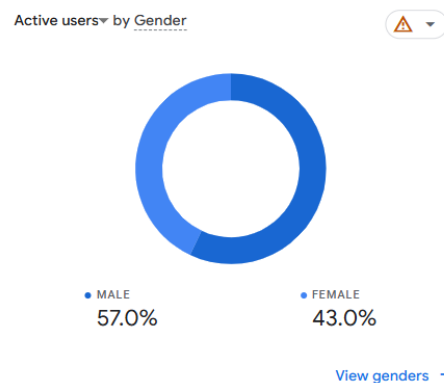


Figure 6. Gender Demographics of Active Users. GA4

To tie these altogether, Figure 7 below shows the Total Revenue of each gender by age group.

Age	Gender	New users	Engaged sessions	Engagement rate	Engaged sessions per active user	Average engagement time per active user	Event count All events	Key events All events	User key event rate purchase	Total revenue
Total		194,480 100% of total	177,964 100% of total	55.07% Avg 0%	0.86 Avg 0%	1m 30s Avg 0%	4,559,713 100% of total	353,998.00 100% of total	2.13% Avg 0%	\$751,442.52 100% of total
1 45-54	male	4,121	5,918	69.92%	1.13	2m 31s	177,476	16,665.00	5.4%	\$54,291.65
2 35-44	female	3,250	4,415	63.03%	1.06	2m 20s	127,851	12,148.00	4.43%	\$60,608.46
3 unknown	male	3,016	3,942	61.74%	1.00	2m 23s	123,091	10,999.00	4.31%	\$27,030.75
4 25-34	female	5,613	8,014	65.57%	1.12	2m 25s	239,598	21,958.00	4.11%	\$54,433.21
5 35-44	male	5,748	8,050	70.52%	1.13	2m 15s	221,469	20,387.00	4.06%	\$41,548.94
6 45-54	female	2,240	2,994	62.91%	1.05	3m 28s	87,589	7,957.00	4.01%	\$27,268.16
7 55-64	male	1,723	1,821	54.49%	0.86	1m 46s	52,422	4,237.00	3.92%	\$14,213.49
8 25-34	male	8,639	12,034	69.25%	1.11	2m 14s	344,057	29,512.00	3.91%	\$56,799.83
9 18-24	male	12,009	15,386	66.34%	1.07	2m 02s	418,184	33,668.00	3.28%	\$68,327.92
10 unknown	female	3,371	4,095	56.11%	0.95	1m 57s	114,301	9,459.00	3.16%	\$20,956.42

Figure 7. Age & Gender Segmented Engagement, Conversion Rate, Total Revenue. GA4

Notice that the **most Total Revenue by Age and Gender is unknown**. This could be an area needed for improvement. Furthermore, from Figure 7, 18–24-year-old males brought the most revenue while 35-44 females brought in the second most in Q3. Lastly, 18–24-year-olds were near the bottom in conversion rate (purchase, highlighted) with 3.28%, while 35-44-year-old female conversion rates were second best with 4.43%.

The objectives here are to increase male 18-24 conversions rates as they spend the most and increase female 35-44 engagement as they spent the second highest with the second highest conversion rate.

What are they using to access the site?

Having understood the key demographics, it's essential to explore how these users engage across devices. Different devices and operating systems can significantly affect user experience, so optimizing for each platform is crucial to improving engagement and conversions. A simple funnel exploration in Figure 3 below demonstrates that **most users access the Google Merchandise Store (GMS) via their mobile**, but the **mobile completion percentage is a mere 0.7%** while **desktop** user completion percentage is over four times higher at 3.2%.

Step	Device category	Active users (% of Step 1)	Completion rate	Abandonments	Abandonment rate
2. Session start	Total	197,271 (100.0%)	100.0%	32	<0.1%
	mobile	96,952 (100.0%)	100.0%	26	<0.1%
	desktop	82,254 (100.0%)	100.0%	0	0.0%
	tablet	15,654 (100.0%)	100.0%	0	0.0%
	smart tv	18 (100.0%)	100.0%	0	0.0%
3. Screen/Page view	Total	197,239 (100.0%)	1.7%	193,873	98.3%
	mobile	96,926 (100.0%)	0.7%	96,212	99.3%
	desktop	82,254 (100.0%)	3.2%	79,619	96.8%
	tablet	15,654 (100.0%)	0.1%	15,637	99.9%
	smart tv	18 (100.0%)	0.0%	18	100.0%

Figure 8. Funnel Exploration. GA4

Here, the *Completion rate* represents the *conversion rate* or the final step in the customer journey (*Purchase*). The fact that mobile users have the highest *Abandonment rate* (99.3%) relative to highest *Active users* suggests most are just browsing.

In contrast, **desktop users have the highest conversion rate (3.2%) and lowest abandonment rate (96.8%), indicating that desktop users should be prioritized for efforts to increase conversions, while mobile users require further optimization to improve their journey to completion.**

How are they interacting with the site?

How a user behaves throughout the site is at the core of the customer journey. Here, we'll look at how different types of users behave on the site. According to Figure 9 below, **when first-time users don't go to the Home page the Android Classic Plushie catches their eye as they view that product the most.** The next popular page in the common path is Bags, specifically the Super G Timbuk 2 Recycled bag.

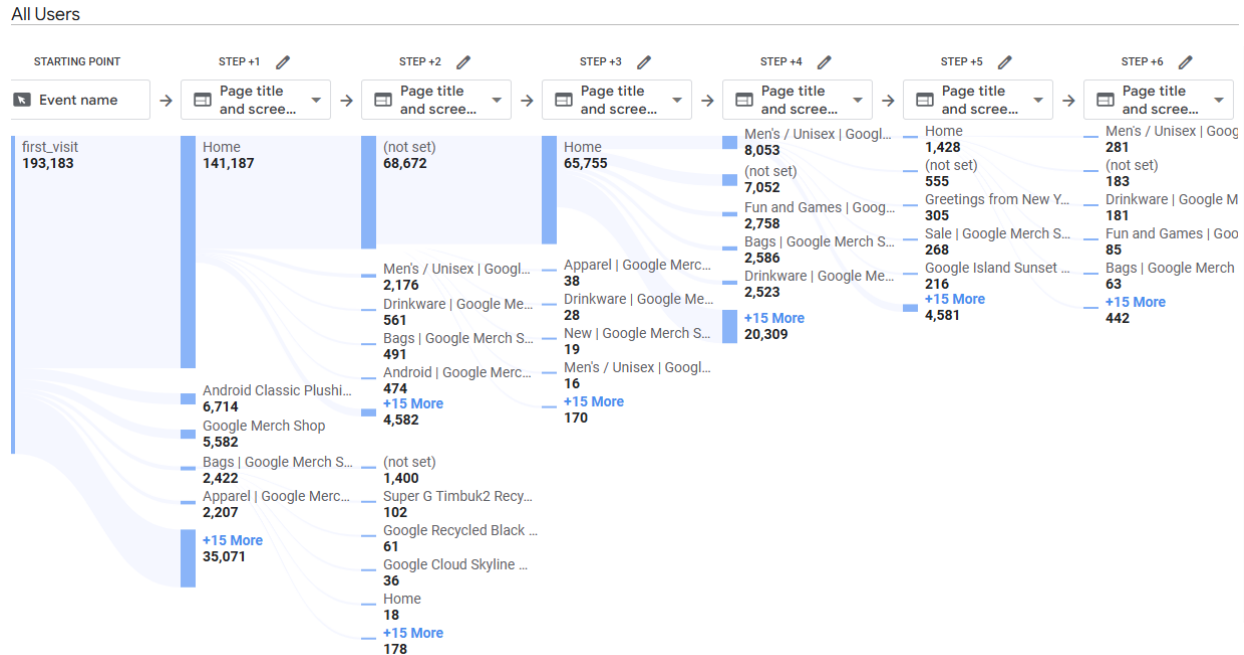


Figure 9. Path Exploration for First Time Users. GA4

Notice that after the Home page, Men's / Unisex Apparel shows up as one of the top paths in each successive page view followed by the Drinkware collection as the next usual top page pathed collection.

This information leads to the insight that the most popular items among first-time users are the Android Plushie, Men's / Unisex Apparel, Drinkware and Bags in this respective order.

In investigating the top spenders, take notice that GA4 uses algorithms to predict the top spenders. These top spenders get right to business as the paths quickly converge to the **Sale** and **New** collections as seen highlighted below in Figure 10. This makes sense as Sale and Trending items bring out the most emotion, typically.

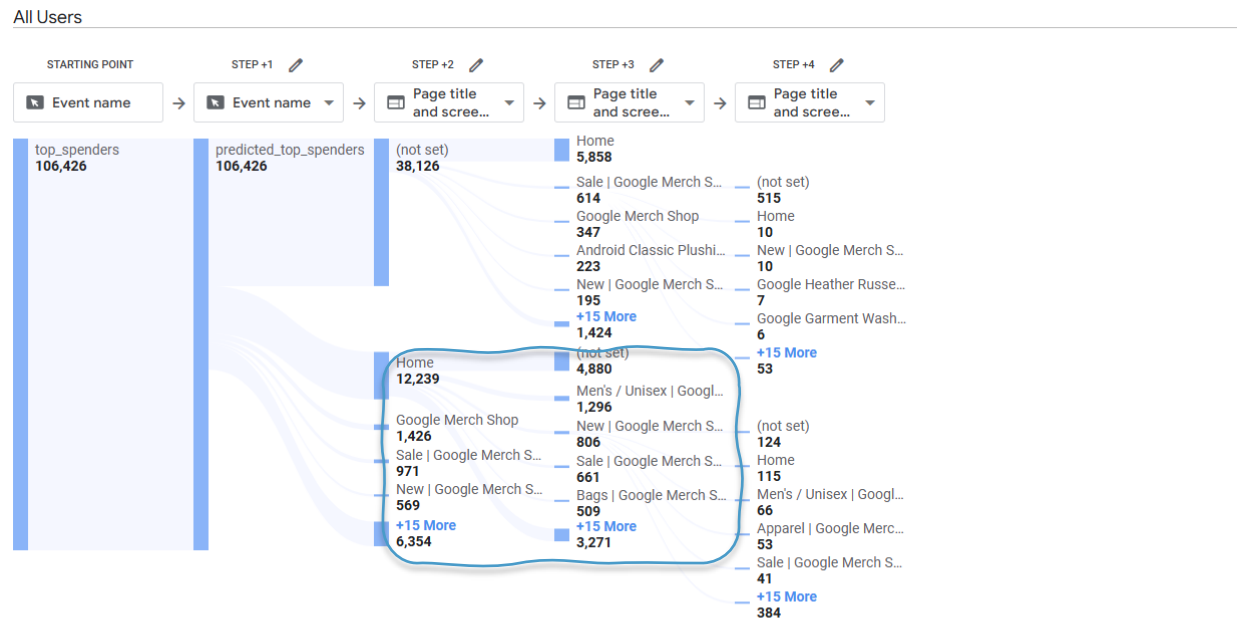


Figure 10. Path Exploration for Top Spenders. GA4

Again, notice Men's / Unisex is frequented early on in pathing and followed by Bags.

This information leads to the fact that, among both top spenders and first-time users, Men's / Unisex and Bags are pathed through the most. While Sale and New are popular next pages with top spenders, Drinkware is a popular next page for first-time users.

To see which paths lead to conversions we must travel from the endpoint back to the start. As we move left along the paths, we see that *view cart* leads to *Purchase*. This isn't enough and we must go further along the paths. Now, Figure 11 below shows the path exploration starting at the endpoint of *view cart*, which leads to purchase. Looking at the leftmost paths, we see that the paths of non-purchasers and purchasers typically come from the same places.

All Users

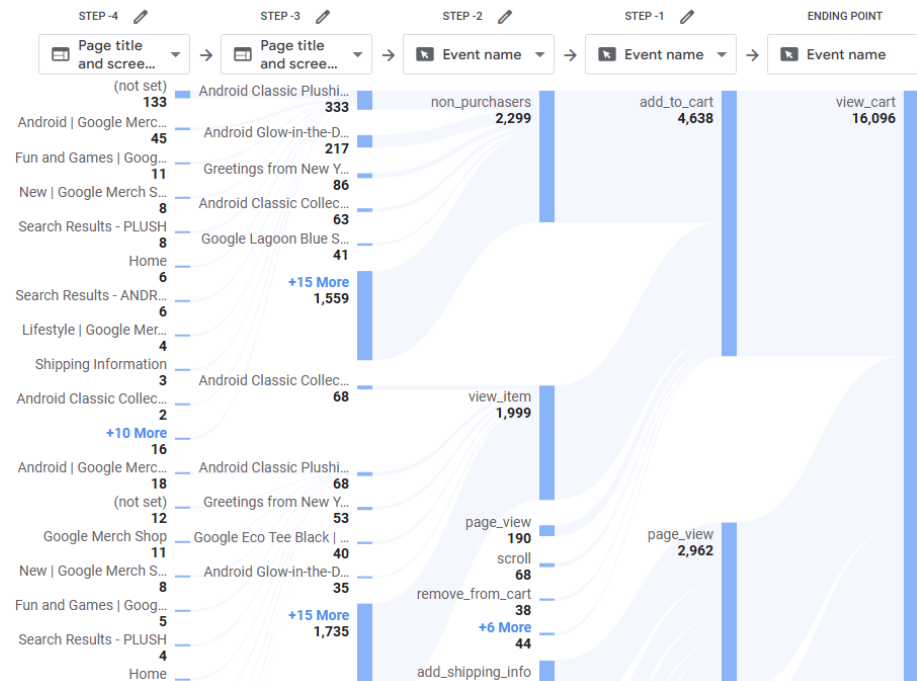


Figure 11. Path Exploration. Purchase as the endpoint. Viewed right to left. GA4

Unfortunately, no meaningful insights are available from this exploration as we already know the most popular items. All we can gather here is that the paths are proportional and parallel for both non-purchasers and purchasers.

Results

Traffic Sources and Engagement

- Referrals and Organic Search offer the best potential for enhancing interactions due to their high engagement rates and average session durations.

Recommendations:

- Strengthen SEO efforts to boost organic search performance.
- Develop targeted campaigns with referral sites to drive high-quality traffic.

Demographics and Regional Performance

- California dominates in active users, engagement, and revenue, outperforming other regions significantly.

Recommendations:

- Focus on creating localized offers and marketing campaigns tailored to California's audience.
- Expand outreach efforts to regions like New York and Texas to leverage their existing potential.

Age and Gender Insights

- Males aged 18-24 contribute the most revenue but have a low conversion rate, while females aged 35-44 have the second-highest revenue with a higher conversion rate.

Recommendations:

- Optimize campaigns targeting 18-24-year-old males with personalized promotions or discounts to encourage conversions.
- Increase engagement efforts for 35-44-year-old females with targeted content or loyalty programs.

Device Usage and Optimization

- Desktop users exhibit the highest conversion rates, while mobile users dominate in traffic but suffer from a high abandonment rate.

Recommendations:

- Enhance the mobile user experience by improving site navigation, reducing load times, and simplifying the checkout process.
- Focus desktop campaigns on high-converting products and exclusive desktop-only deals to maximize conversions.

Product and Path Insights

- Android Plushie, Men's/Unisex Apparel, Drinkware, and Bags are the most popular items for first-time users. Top spenders prioritize Sale and New collections.

Recommendations:

- Feature these popular items prominently on landing pages and promotional emails.
- Create dedicated campaigns for the Sale and New collections to cater to top spenders.

Path to Purchase Analysis

- Purchasers and non-purchasers follow similar paths, but popular items are consistent across journeys.

Recommendations:

- Introduce personalized recommendations based on browsing behavior to nudge users toward completing their purchases.
- Use cart abandonment strategies like retargeting ads and email reminders to convert users who view the cart but do not complete the purchase.

Conclusion

This analysis highlights the customer journey from their demographics, traffic source, and device through the Google Merchandise store and finds opportunities for growth in traffic sources, demographics, product preferences and purchase behaviors. To maximize the Google Merchandise Store's growth, focusing on the top three revenue-generating states - California, New York, and Texas - offers the greatest potential, as these regions far outpace all others in spending. Additionally, optimizing SEO strategies should be prioritized to counteract the steady decline in keyword trends as highlighted by SEMrush. Enhancements to the mobile experience would drive down abandonments, and focusing on high-converting product categories will likely yield the greatest impact on conversions and revenue growth.

Sources

- SEMrush
- Google Analytics 4