Online Shoppers Purchasing Intention

Abstract

Abstract - This research analyzed online shopper behavior using the Online Shoppers Purchasing Intention Dataset, applying both supervised (Decision Tree, Random Forest) and unsupervised (Kmeans clustering) machine learning methods. This research analyzes machine learning models to predict customer purchases using clickstream and supplementary customer datalt emphasizes the role of features such as ExitRates and PageValues in improving prediction accuracy. It emphasizes the role of features such as ExitRates and PageValues in improving prediction accuracy. [1] Random forest was found to portray the best results, while K-means uncovered distinct browsing-based customer segments. Model performance was assessed with relevant metrics, offering valuable insights for e-commerce platforms to enhance user experience and target marketing strategies for better conversion rates. This research bridges data-driven behavioral analysis with practical applications for online retail optimization.

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INTRODUCTION:

In today's data-driven marketplace, understanding customer behavior is essential for e-commerce businesses aiming to enhance customer retention, boost sales, and maximize revenue. [2] This research focuses on analyzing customer purchase intentions using the UCI Online Shoppers Purchasing Intention Dataset, which captures user interaction data across over 12,000 browsing sessions, only a small fraction of which result in completed transactions, the dataset presents a realistic imbalanced classification challenge commonly faced in real-world e-commerce scenarios. To address this, the study applies a combination of supervised learning methods—Decision Tree and Random

Forest—and unsupervised clustering via Kmeans, all structured within the CRISP-DM framework. This dual analytical approach enables both predictive modeling of conversion likelihood and discovery of distinct shopper profiles based on interaction patterns.

The primary aim is to uncover behavioral patterns and identify influential factors that drive purchasing decisions. The insights derived from this analysis hold practical value for online retailers seeking to tailor user experiences, refine marketing strategies, and ultimately improve conversion rates.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW:

1. Decision Trees in Predicting Shopping Intention

Suchacka and Stemplewski [3] investigated how decision trees can be used to predict consumers' intention to shop online. Using a dataset of 305 participants engaged in grocery shopping, the study deployed the C5.0 decision tree algorithm. Results indicated a high prediction accuracy of 90%, emphasizing the strength of decision trees in modeling consumer behavior. This article was included for its direct alignment with this project's

methodology, particularly its use of decision tree classification. It sets a benchmark for the effectiveness of decision trees in e-commerce analytics.

While the study demonstrates impressive accuracy, it is limited by its small, localized dataset and lack of model comparison. The project presented here expands on this by combining decision trees with unsupervised methods like K-Means Clustering to broaden the model perspective and generalizability.

2. Understanding consumer's internet purchase intention in Malaysia

Delafrooz, Paim, and Khatibi [4] explored how consumer attitudes in Malaysia affect their intention to shop online. The study applied the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), revealing that perceived usefulness, ease of use, and subjective norms significantly influence online shopping behavior. This source was selected to incorporate a behavioral and psychological viewpoint into the study, complementing the technical analysis. It bridges human-centered theories with technological acceptance, which are essential for understanding motivation beyond algorithmic output.

The primary limitation of this study is its exclusive use of surveys, lacking the integration of predictive modeling. This project addresses this gap by not only analyzing behavioral features but also applying machine learning techniques to predict outcomes based on such features.

3. Optimizing Classification Methods for Online Buyers' Purchase Intentions in Bangladesh

Hoque et al. [5]evaluated several machine learning classification techniques to predict online buyer behavior in Bangladesh. Among models tested—Logistic Regression, Decision Trees, Random Forest, and KNearest

Neighbors—the Random Forest algorithm delivered the highest accuracy: 99.9% (training) and 89.7% (testing). This study was selected for its comparative evaluation of algorithms and relevance to real-world classification challenges. It offers insight into advanced model performance in a developing e-commerce market.

Though powerful in predictive accuracy, the study neglects clustering or segmentation analysis—key components of this project. By combining supervised and unsupervised learning techniques, the current study contributes a more holistic approach to identifying and predicting user segments and intentions.

4. An Exploration of Clustering Algorithms for Customer Segmentation in the UK Retail Market

Customer segmentation is an essential approach retail analytics, enabling businesses to tailor services and improve customer satisfaction. [6] This study evaluated several machine learning clustering techniques - including K-Means, GMM, DBSCAN, BIRCH, and Agglomerative — using the RFM (Recency, Frequency, Monetary) model and PCA to process a large UK retail dataset. Results indicated that the Gaussian Mixture Model performed best with a Silhouette Score of 0.80, outperforming other methods.

Prior research has utilized individual clustering techniques for segmentation, such as the ensemble clustering by Hicham and Karim [7], or the variable-based selection approach by Turkmen [8]. However, these studies lacked direct algorithm comparisons or dimensionality reduction integration like PCA, as done here.

While this study offers a broader comparison, it still leaves room for exploring more adaptive or hybrid models such as spectral clustering or deep learning-based segmentation.

Moreover, though historical works like those by Ramanathan et al. [9] and Oussous et al. [10] emphasize the role of Big Data and BI in understanding customer profiles, few link these technologies with advanced unsupervised learning frameworks. This gap indicates the need for research integrating newer AI models for real-time segmentation or contextual behavioral analysis.

5. Using DBSCAN to Identify Customer Segments with High Churn Risk on Amazon Consumer Behaviour Data.

This study applies the DBSCAN algorithm to segment Amazon customers based on variables like demographics, shopping behavior, reviews, and recommendation interactions [11]. DBSCAN was chosen due to its ability to detect clusters of varying densities and shapes without predefining the number of segments. The model identified groups with differing churn risks, providing actionable insights for improving customer retention strategies.

Previous literature has focused on outlier detection and clickstream data analysis However, few studies directly utilized DBSCAN for churn analysis, and even fewer addressed how demographic and behavioral attributes combine to indicate customer risk levels.

Although the paper effectively demonstrates DBSCAN's utility in detecting at-risk customers, it does not explore sentiment analysis or textual review mining. Future work could integrate NLP or deep clustering to enhance personalization and prediction.

III. METHODOLOGY:

This study utilizes the "Online Shoppers
Purchasing Intention Dataset" from the UCI
Machine Learning Repository, containing
12,330 browsing sessions and 18 attributes
capturing user behavior as shown in **Figure**

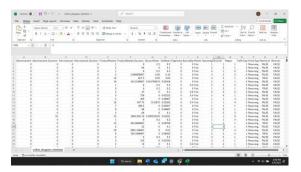


Figure 1-Online Shoppers Purchasing Intention Dataset

These attributes encompass a range of user interactions on an e-commerce platform, including metrics such as page views, time spent on pages, referral sources, and visitor categorization. The binary target variable, 'Revenue', indicates whether a session culminated in a transaction. Key features include categorical variables like Month, and Weekend, VisitorType, alongside numerical variables such as Administrative Administrative duration, pages, ProductRelated ProductRelated pages, duration, PageValues, ExitRates, and BounceRates.

Features	Variable names		
Categorical features	Month, visitor type, Weekend		
Numerical features	Administrative, Administrative Information, product-related, product-related duration, page values, exit rates, bounce rates		
Target	Revenue		

The project followed the CRISP-DM methodology. The **Business Understanding** stage focused on identifying patterns that predict purchase behavior to help ecommerce businesses improve conversion rates through personalized strategies. In the Data

Understanding phase, we conducted initial exploration through descriptive statistics and correlation analyses. This involved checking the data structure using df.head() and df.info(), and descriptive statistics with examining df.describe(). Missing values were identified using df.isnull().sum().Exploratory data analysis revealed notable correlations between features such as ProductRelated ProductRelated Duration, as as BounceRates and ExitRates. .During Data Preparation, we addressed missing values, encoded categorical variables (Month, VisitorType, Weekend), and applied feature standardize scaling to numerical measurementsFor Modeling, Decision Tree, Random Forest, and K-means clustering algorithms were selected to provide both predictive and segmentation insights. These models were chosen for their interpretability suitability for classification unsupervised grouping. The **Evaluation** phase involved assessing the performance of the classification models (Decision Tree and Random Forest) using relevant metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, F1score, and AUC-ROC. The K-Means clustering was evaluated using the

Silhouette Score to determine the quality of the clusters. Although **Deployment** was not implemented, the findings can inform realworld applications such as targeted advertising and user experience personalization. [12]

The Decision Tree and Random Forest models were chosen for their classification capabilities, while K-Means Clustering was used for customer segmentation based on behavioral patterns. Together, these models facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the data and provide actionable insights.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

This study employs both supervised and unsupervised machine learning approaches to

understand online shopping behavior. For supervised learning, we implemented Decision Tree and Random Forest classifiers to predict purchase intentions, while Kmeans clustering provided unsupervised segmentation of customer behavioral patterns.

The dataset was initially assessed for structure and cleanliness. No missing values were found, as shown in **Appendix Figure 1.** To prepare the data for analysis, categorical features were transformed using Label Encoding, while numerical features intended for clustering were standardized to ensure equal contribution. A correlation matrix was used to examine multicollinearity as shown in Appendix 2. **Figure** Features like ProductRelated and BounceRates, which showed high correlation (p > 0.7) with ProductRelated Duration and ExitRates, respectively, were dropped to improve model performance.

Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) uncovered several important trends. A correlation matrix was generated to identify highly correlated features. A notable finding was the seasonal pattern in purchases, with certain months showing higher conversion rates than others. Visuals such as histograms, boxplots, and line graphs illustrated that PageValues and ProductRelated Duration were positively associated with purchases, while higher ExitRates were more frequent in nonpurchasing sessions, as shown in Appendix Figure 3. These patterns shaped feature selection for both supervised and unsupervised models.

SUPERVISED LEARNING RESULTS:

The Decision Tree classifier was implemented with strategic hyperparameter tuning—setting max_depth=5, applying cost-complexity pruning (ccp_alpha=0.01), and using class_weight='balanced' to address the dataset's inherent imbalance. The initial model

achieved an accuracy of 0.82, which improved to 0.87, as shown in Appendix Figure 6, after tuning parameters as shown in Figure 2.

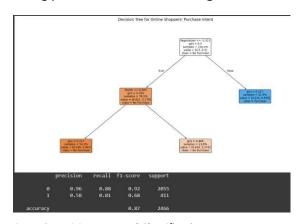


Figure 2-Decision Tree and Classification report.

To better align with business needs, the decision threshold was raised from 0.5 to 0.7, enhancing **precision**, meaning predictions of "purchase" were more reliable even if recall decreased. Feature importance analysis revealed that PageValues was the most significant predictor, followed by ExitRates and ProductRelated_Duration, as shown in **Appendix Figure 4.**

An ensemble of 100 decision trees was trained (n estimators=100, max_depth=5, min_samples_split=50) using all available CPU cores (n jobs=-1). [13]It achieved an accuracy of 0.87, demonstrating enhanced reliability and robustness by averaging predictions across multiple trees. The model's performance was evaluated using metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score as shown in Appendix Figure 5, and AUC-ROC curve. The confusion matrix and classification report confirmed that while false negatives were still present due to the class imbalance, overall model robustness and precision increased, making the Random Forest the superior predictive tool in this study as shown in Figure 3.

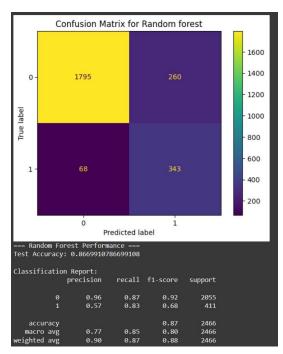


Figure 3-Confusion Matrix and Classification Report

Unsupervised Learning Results:

K-means clustering was applied to identify natural groupings in shopping behavior. To determine the optimal number of clusters, both the elbow method, **as shown in**

Appendix Figure 7, and the silhouette score were used. Evaluating cluster quality using the Silhouette Score is recommended by

Lleti et al. (2004). [14] The optimal "k" is the one that results in the highest Silhouette score; thus, k=2 was selected as the optimal number of clusters, as shown in **Figure 4.**

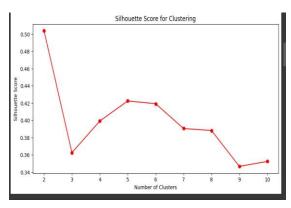


Figure 4-Optimal K with Silhouette score

The clustering analysis utilized features like PageValues, ProductRelated_Duration, and ExitRates, excluding highly correlated

features. A correlation matrix was used, and features with a correlation coefficient above 0.7 were considered highly correlated, as shown in Appendix Figure 8.

The K-Means algorithm converged after 28 iterations, resulting in two distinct shopper segments. The characteristics of these segments are visualized in 2D, as shown in Appendix Figure 9, and 3D plots as shown in Figure 5.

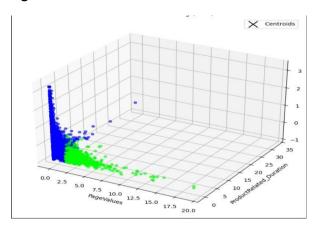


Figure 5-3D plot of clusters

The datapoints in the dataset where mainly Os and 1s and after standardization all the data points where found to be in between the range of 0 and 1 which made the cluster look like it is grouped in a singe area and not separated. The analysis of the Cluster 1 (Majority 85% of shoppers, i.e., blue cluster) revealed that the majority of shoppers exhibit lower 'PageValues', 'ProductRelated Duration', and higher 'ExitRates' compared to Cluster 2. This suggests a large group of users who exhibit less engagement with the website, potentially representing casual browsers or window shoppers with a higher propensity to abandon their sessions. While Cluster 2 (Minority, i.e., green cluster) is smaller (approximately 15%) displayed significantly higher PageValues and ProductRelated Duration, indicative of a

more engaged segment actively exploring product details. However, they also exhibit

higher 'ExitRates'. This could suggest that while they are interested in products, they may encounter issues during the checkout process or find the website navigation challenging.

Results: The findings from both the supervised and unsupervised analyses provide a holistic view of online shopper behavior. The most significant insights from this integrated analysis can be summed up to say that Two distinct shopping behavior patterns naturally emerge from the data.ageValues serves as the strongest purchase predictor. User engagement metrics like ProductRelated Duration significantly impact purchase decisions.Exit rates are inversely related to purchase probability. The identified shopper segments allow for tailored strategies, such as targeted marketing campaigns for the highly engaged segment and website improvements to reduce exit rates for both groups. The validation of the supervised models through standard metrics provides confidence in the reliability of the identified predictors.

V. PEER REVIEW:

The peer review, as shown in Figure 6, provided valuable insights that improved my analysis and communication. I implemented several valuable suggestions. Grouping visuals with their interpretations greatly improved readability, while including specific accuracy and silhouette scores strengthened evaluation section. This process also encouraged me to adopt a more concise writing style, enhancing clarity and accessibility.



Figure 6-Feedback that I got

In reflecting on my feedback to a peer, as shown in **Figure 7**, I emphasized the importance of clearer research objectives and stronger justification for model choices. This helped me appreciate the need for clear communication and grammatical accuracy in presenting data analysis.



Figure 7-The feedback that I provided

Overall, the peer review process enhanced my ability to structure my findings effectively and communicate them clearly, contributing to my professional development in data science.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This study successfully implemented and analyzed both supervised and unsupervised machine learning models to predict online shopping purchase intentions and identify distinct customer segments. The primary objective was to uncover key predictors of purchase intention and identify customer segments and was effectively achieved. The analysis of the UCI Online Shoppers Purchasing

Intention dataset yielded several valuable insights.

Firstly the supervised models particularly the Decision Tree and Random Forest, identified most influential predictors of purchase intention being 'PageValues' which emerged as the dominant predictor and highlighting the importance of presenting high-value content, 'ProductRelated_Duration' demonstrated that meaningful engagement with product information significantly increases conversion likelihood, and 'ExitRates' revealed potential friction points that deter purchases. Secondly, the K-means clustering effectively segmented the users into two primary groups which is: a large segment of less engaged, casual browsers (Cluster 1), a smaller but significant segment of highly engaged potential buyers (Cluster 2) who, despite showing strong initial interest, exhibit higher exit rates, suggesting potential friction points in their purchasing journey. Random Finally, the Forest model demonstrated a marginal but noteworthy improvement in predictive performance (accuracy = 0.89, F1-score =

0.66) over the Decision Tree (accuracy = 0.87, F1-score = 0.61), confirming our hypothesis that ensemble methods would yield better results for this complex prediction task.

For future work, several recommendations can be made, like implementing more advanced ensemble methods, like Gradient Boosting or XGBoost to potentially improve prediction accuracy. Exploring feature engineering to create more predictive variables, especially regarding temporal aspects of user behaviour. Also prioritize improving high-exit pages, especially for Cluster 2 users who show high intent but abandon sessions mid-funnel. Additionally, applying more sophisticated clustering techniques like DBSCAN or hierarchical clustering can help identify more nuanced customer segments.

Peer feedback was valuable in improving both the structure and clarity of the report. By pairing each visual directly with its interpretation, the flow became more intuitive and easier to follow. Incorporating specific metrics such as accuracy and silhouette scores added precision to model evaluations. Finally, tightening the language to reduce repetition helped create a more engaging and professional narrative. This feedback cycle has enhanced my ability to communicate technical findings clearly which is an essential skill in collaborative data science environments and has reinforced the importance of presenting insights in a concise, actionable format.

VII. REFERENCES

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VIII. APPENDIX:

K-Means Clustering Code link: https://colab.research.google.com/drive

/12Chm3RPyZqmrIMRHdVSG03gz1VtXMre?us p=sharing

Decision Tree and Random Fores Code Link:

https://colab.research.google.com/drive/ /1zaKeMWI7xKLBccWVVkvB2KbXDZSak 6X0?usp=sharing

Figure 1. NO Null values



Figure 2: Feature Correlation Heatmap

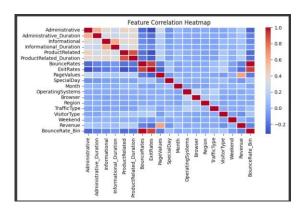


Figure 3. BOX Plot for Average Exit Rates on High Value pages

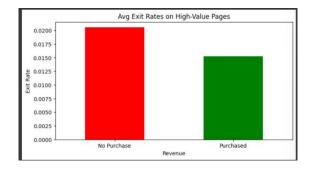
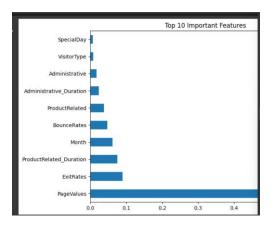


Figure 4. Top 10 Important Feature



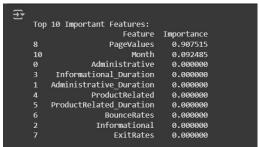


Figure 5. Accuracy, Precision, Recall, F1score Report for Randon forest

Test Accui	racy	: 0.86699107	86699108		
Classifica	atio	n Report:			
		precision	recall	f1-score	support
	0	0.96	0.87	0.92	2055
		0.57	0.83	0.68	411
accura	асу			0.87	2466
macro a	avg	0.77	0.85	0.80	2466
weighted a	ovg	0.90	0.87	0.88	2466

Figure 6. Classification report for Decision Tree before tuning and after tuning

	precision	recall	f1-score	support
ø	0.97	0.81	0.89	2055
1	0.48	0.88	0.62	411
accuracy			0.82	2466
macro avg	0.73	0.85	0.75	2466
weighted avg	0.89	0.82	0.84	2466

	precision	recall	f1-score	support
0	0.96	0.88	0.92	2055
1	0.58	0.81	0.68	411
accuracy			0.87	2466
macro avg	0.77	0.85	0.80	2466
weighted avg	0.90	0.87	0.88	2466

Figure 7. Elbow Method for K- Means Clustering

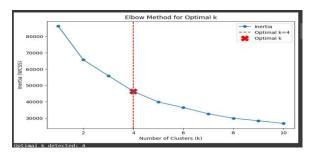


Figure 8. Correlation Matrix for K-means Clustering

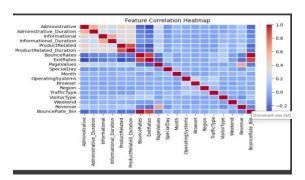
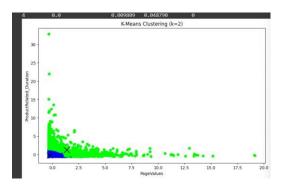


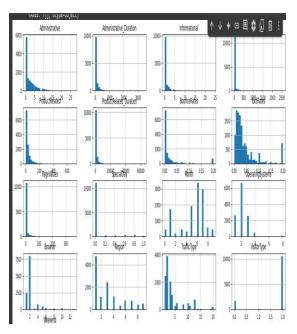
Figure 9. 2D visual of Cluster with k=2



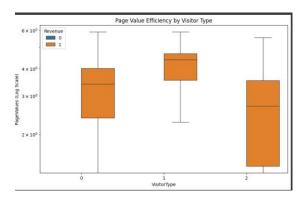
Other Relevant Figures not included in the report:

K-Means Clustering:

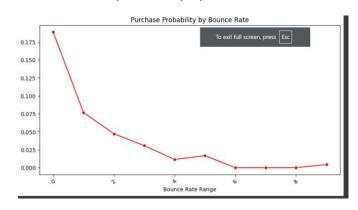
1. Histogram of all variables to find outliers



2. Comparing Page value with Histogram:



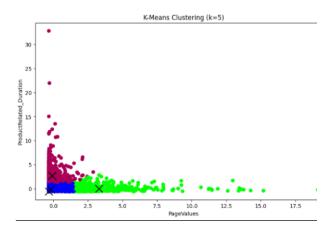
3. Purchase probability by bounce rates:



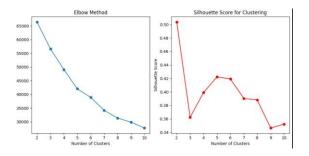
4. Finding the highly correlated variables:

<u>-</u>		ProductRel	ated	ProductRelated	_Duration	BounceRates
	ProductRelated		NaN		0.860927	NaN
	ProductRelated_Duration	0.86	0927		NaN	NaN
	BounceRates		NaN		NaN	NaN
	ExitRates		NaN		NaN	0.906606
	BounceRate_Bin		NaN		NaN	0.993604
		ExitRates	Boun	ceRate_Bin		
	ProductRelated	NaN		NaN		
	ProductRelated_Duration	NaN		NaN		
	BounceRates	0.906606		0.993604		
	ExitRates	NaN		0.904945		
	BounceRate_Bin	0.904945		NaN		

5. 2D plot of cluster when k = 4

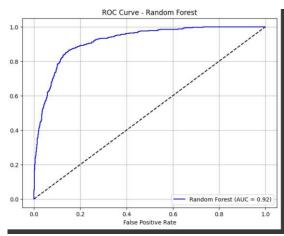


6. Comparison of K value with the elbow method and Silhoutte Score

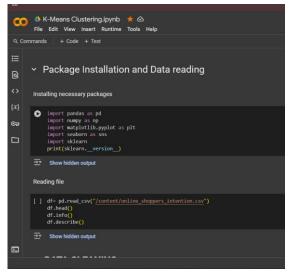


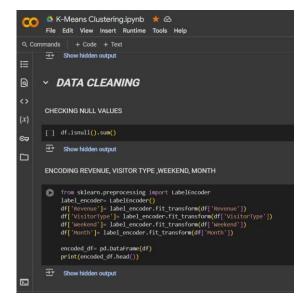
Random Forest:

7.ROC Curve for Random Forest:

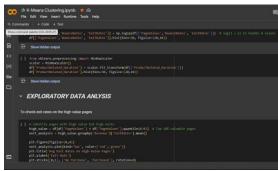


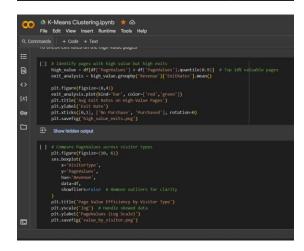
K-Means Clustering Codes:

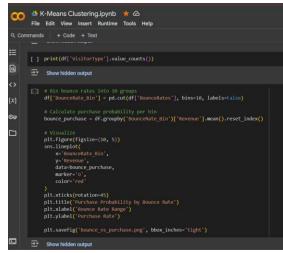












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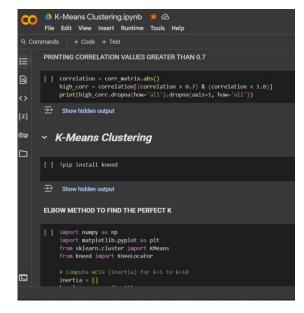
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** Find the optimal k using Encetocator  

knee, locator - Kneetocator (kyalues, inertia, curve="convex", direction="decreasing")  

optimal k = knee locator.knee

** Plot Elbow Method with an "X" at the best k  

plt.figure(figizie=(8, 5))  

plt.scatter (optimal k, inertia, marker="o", linestyle="c", label="inertia")  

plt.scatter (optimal k, inertia, marker="o", linestyle="c", label="inertia")  

plt.scatter (optimal k, inertia, marker="o", inestyle="c", label="inertia")  

plt.scatter (optimal k, inex-locator knee y, marker="o", color="red", solor="red", solor=
```

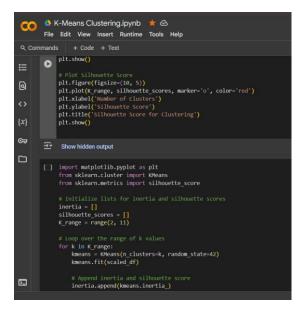
```
**Sk-Means Clustering ipynb **  

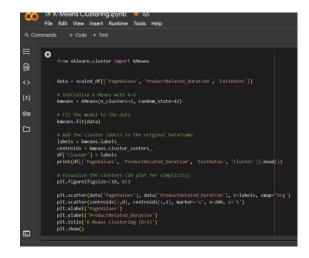
**Tile Edit View Insert Runtime Tools Help

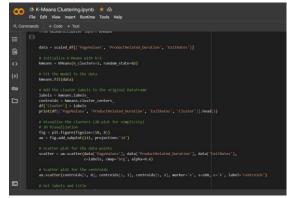
**Q Commands** | + Code + Text

**Tile Code + Text

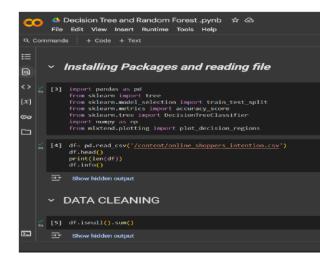
*
```

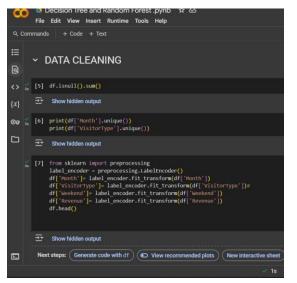






Decision Tree:





Random Forest:

