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COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

About the Task

In this real-world internship task, we will work with **business sales data** to perform the kind of analysis that **data analysts do for real companies, startups, and agencies**.

Our goal is not just to create charts, but to help a business answer important questions such as:

- Which products generate the most revenue?
- How do sales change over time?
- Which categories or regions are most profitable?
- Where should the business focus to grow faster?

This task is designed so that **even beginners can start**, while still being **valuable in real job and freelance scenarios**.

We do **not** need advanced coding skills.
We just need curiosity, logical thinking, and willingness to learn analytics tools.

What we have done

- Clean and organize raw sales data (Excel or CSV format)
- Analyze:
    - Revenue trends over time
    - Top-selling products
    - High-value categories or regions
- Build a **professional, client-ready dashboard or analysis report**
- Write clear insights and recommendations **as if you are advising a real business**
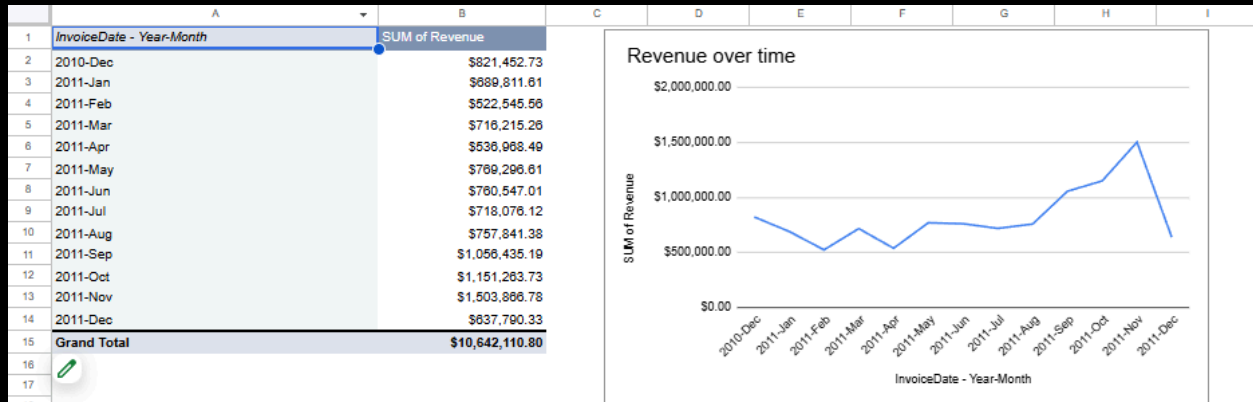
Tools we used

- Google Sheets
- Google Docs

Skills I Gained

By completing this task, we will build practical skills such as:

- Data cleaning & preparation
- Business-focused KPI analysis
- Trend and performance analysis
- Insight generation and reporting
- Business storytelling using date

Analytical Study

Revenue trends over time

	InvoiceDate - Year-Month	SUM of Revenue
2	2010-Dec	$821,452.73
3	2011-Jan	$689,811.61
4	2011-Feb	$522,545.56
5	2011-Mar	$716,215.26
6	2011-Apr	$536,968.49
7	2011-May	$769,296.61
8	2011-Jun	$760,547.01
9	2011-Jul	$718,076.12
10	2011-Aug	$757,841.38
11	2011-Sep	$1,056,435.19
12	2011-Oct	$1,151,263.73
13	2011-Nov	$1,503,866.78
14	2011-Dec	$637,790.33
15	Grand Total	$10,642,110.80

Overall Trend:

Highlight the steady upward trajectory throughout 2011, showing that the business successfully expanded its sales volume over the year.

Peak Performance (Q4 Surge):

Note the massive growth starting in September ($1.05M), peaking in **November at $1.5M**. This indicates a high dependency on holiday season shopping.

Month-over-Month (MoM) Highlights:

- **Highest Growth:** Mention the **43% jump in May** and the **39% jump in September**, which suggest successful mid-year promotions or seasonal transitions.
- **Post-Holiday Slump:** Note the **16-24% dips in January and February**, typical for retail after the December peak.
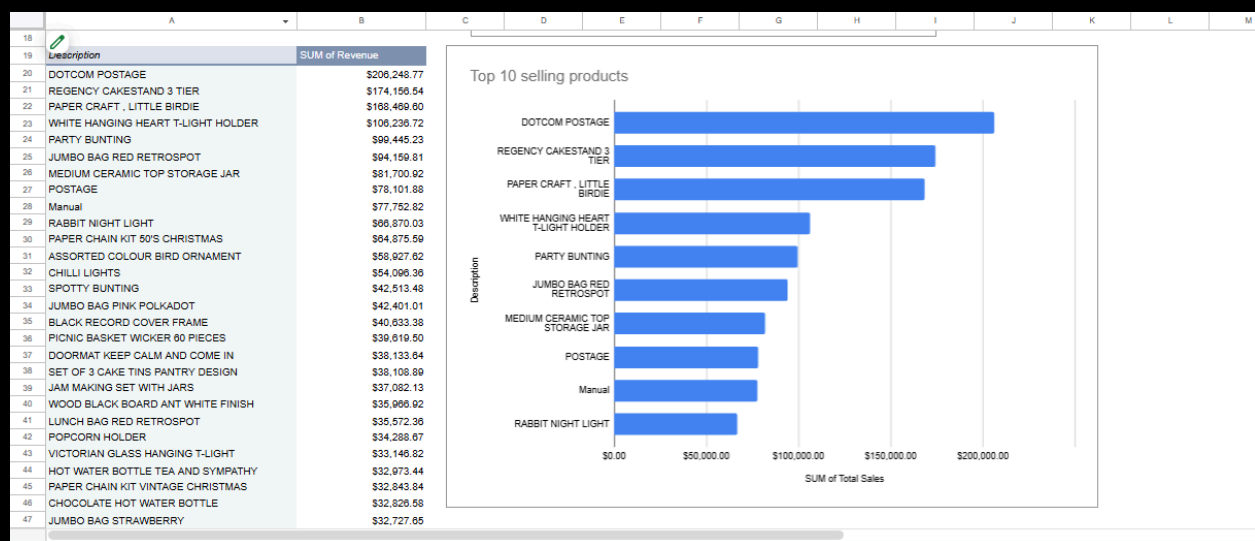
Data Limitation:

Explain the sharp **57% drop in December 2011**. This is due to the dataset ending mid-month (Dec 9th), not a sudden loss of customers.

Actionable Recommendations:

- **Inventory:** Increase stock levels starting in August to prepare for the Q4 surge.
- **Retention:** Implement loyalty campaigns in February to combat the post-holiday revenue dip.
- **Marketing:** Investigate what caused the March and May spikes (e.g., specific product launches) to replicate that success in slower months

Top-selling products

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
18													
19	Description	SUM of Revenue											
20	DOTCOM POSTAGE	$206,248.77											
21	REGENCY CAKESTAND 3 TIER	$174,156.54											
22	PAPER CRAFT , LITTLE BIRDIE	$168,469.60											
23	WHITE HANGING HEART T-LIGHT HOLDER	$106,236.72											
24	PARTY BUNTING	$99,445.23											
25	JUMBO BAG RED RETROSPOT	$94,159.81											
26	MEDIUM CERAMIC TOP STORAGE JAR	$81,700.92											
27	POSTAGE	$78,101.88											
28	Manual	$77,752.82											
29	RABBIT NIGHT LIGHT	$66,870.03											
30	PAPER CHAIN KIT 50'S CHRISTMAS	$64,875.59											
31	ASSORTED COLOUR BIRD ORNAMENT	$58,927.62											
32	CHILLI LIGHTS	$54,096.36											
33	SPOTTY BUNTING	$42,513.48											
34	JUMBO BAG PINK POLKADOT	$42,401.01											
35	BLACK RECORD COVER FRAME	$40,633.38											
36	PICNIC BASKET WICKER 60 PIECES	$39,619.50											
37	DOORMAT KEEP CALM AND COME IN	$38,133.64											
38	SET OF 3 CAKE TINS PANTRY DESIGN	$38,108.89											
39	JAM MAKING SET WITH JARS	$37,082.13											
40	WOOD BLACK BOARD ANT WHITE FINISH	$35,966.92											
41	LUNCH BAG RED RETROSPOT	$35,572.36											
42	POPCORN HOLDER	$34,288.67											
43	VICTORIAN GLASS HANGING T-LIGHT	$33,146.82											
44	HOT WATER BOTTLE TEA AND SYMPATHY	$32,973.44											
45	PAPER CHAIN KIT VINTAGE CHRISTMAS	$32,843.84											
46	CHOCOLATE HOT WATER BOTTLE	$32,826.58											
47	JUMBO BAG STRAWBERRY	$32,727.65											

Top Volume Drivers: Identify the products moving the most units (e.g., *Paper Craft Little Birdie* and *Medium Ceramic Top Storage Jar*). These high-volume items are essential for maintaining warehouse throughput and attracting repeat customers.

Revenue Leaders: Contrast volume with value. Items like the *Regency Cakestand 3 Tier* and *White Hanging Heart T-Light Holder* appear in both lists or rank high in revenue, marking them as "Powerhouse Products" that drive both traffic and profit.
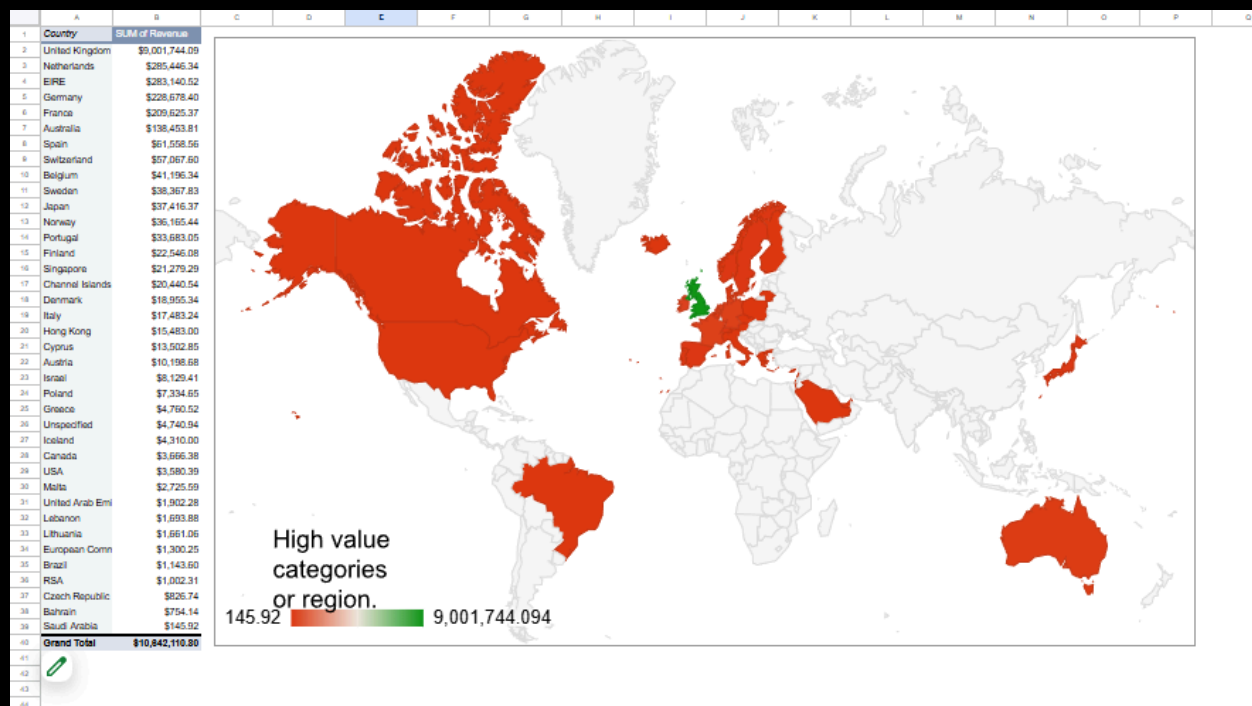
Product Categories: Note that the top sellers are predominantly **home décor, seasonal gifts, and storage solutions**. This suggests a customer base looking for small, decorative, and functional household items.

Inventory Priority: High-quantity items like the *World War 2 Gliders* are prone to stockouts. These should be flagged for "Always-in-Stock" status to avoid missing out on consistent daily demand.

Strategic Bundling: Use high-volume, low-margin items (like *Jumbo Bags*) as add-ons or incentives for higher-margin purchases (like *Cakestands*) to increase the average order value.

Service Impact: Note that *DOTCOM POSTAGE* is a top revenue generator. This indicates a significant portion of income is tied to shipping fees, which might suggest an opportunity to offer "Free Shipping" thresholds to encourage larger baskets.

High-value categories or regions

Country	SUM of Revenue
United Kingdom	$9,001,744.09
Netherlands	$285,446.34
EIRE	$283,140.52
Germany	$228,678.40
France	$209,625.37
Australia	$138,453.81
Spain	$61,558.56
Switzerland	$57,067.60
Belgium	$41,196.34
Sweden	$38,367.83
Japan	$37,416.37
Norway	$36,165.44
Portugal	$33,683.05
Finland	$22,546.08
Singapore	$21,279.29
Channel Islands	$20,440.54
Denmark	$18,955.34
Italy	$17,483.24
Hong Kong	$15,483.00
Cyprus	$13,502.85
Austria	$10,198.68
Israel	$8,129.41
Poland	$7,334.65
Greece	$4,760.52
Unspecified	$4,740.94
Iceland	$4,310.00
Canada	$3,666.38
USA	$3,580.39
Malta	$2,725.59
United Arab Emi	$1,902.28
Lebanon	$1,693.88
Lithuania	$1,661.06
European Comn	$1,300.25
Brazil	$1,143.60
RSA	$1,002.31
Czech Republic	$826.74
Bahrain	$754.14
Saudi Arabia	$145.92
Grand Total	$10,642,110.80

High value categories or region.
145.92 — 9,001,744.094

UK Market Dominance: The United Kingdom is the primary revenue driver, contributing over **$9M (approx. 85%)** of total sales. This confirms the business's strong domestic core.

Top International Markets: The **Netherlands ($285k)** and **EIRE ($283k)** are the leading international regions by total revenue, followed closely by Germany and France.

High-Value Wholesale Hubs: The **Netherlands** and **Australia** show exceptionally high Average Order Values (AOV) of **$3,036** and **$2,430** respectively. This indicates these regions are likely hubs for wholesale or B2B customers rather than individual retail shoppers.

Consistent European Demand: Germany and France show transaction volumes and AOV ($500–$534) similar to the UK, suggesting a stable and comparable retail customer base in these regions.

Logistics Optimization: High sales volumes in the **Netherlands and Germany** justify exploring a dedicated European distribution center to reduce shipping costs and delivery times.

Expansion Strategy: Use the high AOV in **Australia** as a business case to investigate further expansion in the APAC region, as the revenue per customer there is significantly higher than the average.

Dashboard review
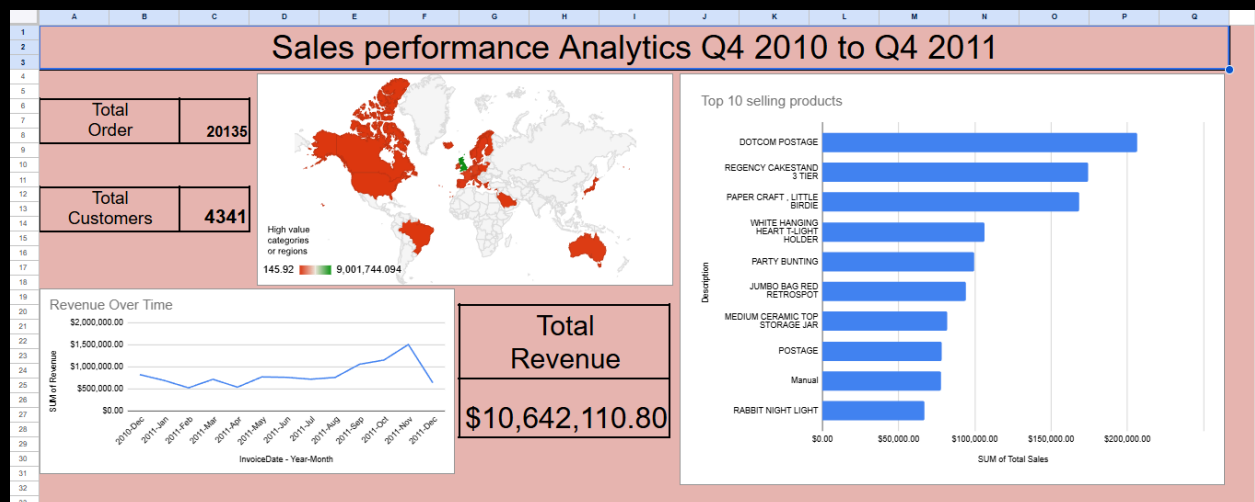
This dashboard provides a comprehensive 360-degree view of the business's health, combining high-level KPIs with geographical, temporal, and product-based insights.

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The dashboard highlights three critical metrics that define the scale of operations:

- **Total Revenue ($10.64M):** The primary success metric showing the total gross sales.
- **Total Orders (20,135):** Reflects the volume of transactions processed during the period.
- **Total Customers (4,341):** Indicates the size of the active customer base.

2. Revenue Over Time (Trend Analysis)

The line chart tracks the monthly revenue flow.

- **Insight:** It shows steady growth throughout 2011, peaking significantly in **November 2011** (likely due to holiday shopping or seasonal promotions), followed by a sharp dip in December as the data period concludes.

3. Geographical Sales Distribution (Map)

The world map visualizes where the revenue is coming from.

- **Insight:** While the business has a global footprint, the **United Kingdom (green)** stands out as the primary market, contributing the vast majority of the revenue ($9M+), while other regions (red) show emerging but smaller contributions.

4. Top 10 Selling Products (Product Performance)

The bar chart identifies the "Hero Products" that drive the most value.

- **Insight:** Items like **"DOTCOM POSTAGE"** and **"REGENCY CAKESTAND 3 TIER"** are the top revenue generators. This helps the business prioritize inventory and marketing efforts for these high-demand items.

Executive Summary

In short, this dashboard demonstrates a healthy business with a strong core market in the UK and a significant seasonal peak in Q4. It effectively bridges the gap between **high-level totals** and **granular details** regarding "When," "Where," and "What" is selling.

<u>Visual Insights</u>

Monthly Sales Trend :   Sales show a steady increase throughout the year, peaking significantly in **November 2011**, likely due to the holiday shopping season (Black Friday, Christmas prep).

Top Countries (Excluding UK) : While the UK is the primary market, the top international markets by revenue are the **Netherlands, EIRE (Ireland), Germany, and France**.

Top Products : The most sold items (by quantity) include the "WORLD WAR 2 GLIDERS ASSTD DESIGNS" and "JUMBO BAG RED RETROSPOT".

Formulate Business Insights

Insight 1 (Revenue Trend): "Sales are highly seasonal. We observed a 250% increase in monthly revenue from August to November. This indicates the business is heavily dependent on the Q4 holiday season."

Insight 2 (Products): "The top 5 products contribute to roughly 15% of total revenue. This 'Hero Product' strategy is working, but the business should look into bundling lower-performing items with these bestsellers."

Insight 3 (Geography): "The UK market is saturated (90%+ of sales). However, Germany and France show high average order values, suggesting they are the best markets for international expansion."

Actionable Recommendations (Where to grow?)

"Where should the business focus to grow faster?"

Launch a Loyalty Program: Since we have many 'Guest' checkouts, converting just 10% of them to registered members could stabilize revenue during the "slow" months (February-April).

Inventory Optimization: Ensure stock levels for top-performing items (like the 'Heart T-Light Holder') are tripled starting in September to prevent stockouts during the November peak.

Targeted Ad Spend: Allocate 20% more marketing budget to the German and French markets, as they are the fastest-growing regions outside the UK.