Task One

Practise common keyboard shortcuts to make working in Excel more efficient.

Spreadsheet actions and movement:

Save: Ctrl-SPrint: Ctrl-PUndo: Ctrl-ZRedo: Ctrl-Y

• Jump to Bottom of Data: Ctrl-Down Arrow

Jump to Top of Data: Ctrl-Up Arrow
Go to Previous Sheet: Ctrl-Page Up
Go to Next Sheet: Ctrl-Page Down

Data selection:

• Select All Data in Column: Ctrl-Shift-Down Arrow

Select Whole Column: Ctrl-SpaceSelect All Data in Row: Shift-SpaceSelect All Data in Region: Ctrl-A

Task Two (background)

Demonstrate key conditional formatting techniques in Microsoft Excel.

Conditional formatting is a technique in Excel to make data exploration visual. You format the data (its colors, fonts, highlighting, etc.) based on the criteria you select. This allows you to quickly identify values that are either a data quality problem (missing values, formula errors, nonsensical values, etc.) or a value that drives insights and decisions (i.e., sales growth below a set target; inventory below a set amount, which would trigger re-ordering; etc.)

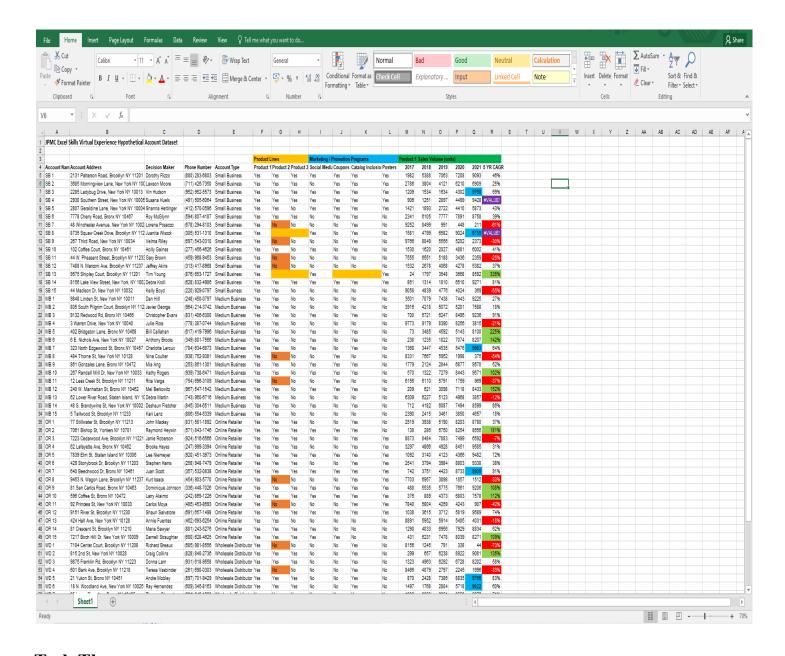
Excel's conditional formatting tools are easy to use but have a large and powerful array of options for criteria to base formatting on, including the ability to write your own formulas. You can even use the conditional formatting tools to format colorful and visually easy-to-read reports and simple dashboards of your data, creating visuals such as "heat maps" and even "Harvey ball" rankings to visually indicate data that meet specific criteria.

Excel file attached name -Account Sales Data for Analysis

TASK-

use the conditional formatting tools (either the menu-based tools or write your own conditional formatting formulas, whichever you prefer) to do the following explorations of the data:

- Highlight any cells with formula errors in purple with white text.
- Highlight any cells with missing values in yellow.
- Identify accounts that have not been cross-sold with Product 2 by highlighting the appropriate Product 2 cells in orange.
- Identify accounts that have a 5-year sales CAGR of at least 100% by highlighting the appropriate CAGR cells in green and any accounts with a negative CAGR in red with white text.
- Identify accounts in the top 10% of unit sales for 2021 by highlighting the appropriate 2021 unit sales cells in blue.



Task Three (background)

Familiarise yourself with VBA, Excel's built-in programming language.

Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) is a useful language to learn and skill to develop because it is built into the entire suite of Microsoft products, meaning VBA is also the programming language built into Word, PowerPoint, and other Microsoft applications. This means you can use VBA to integrate data and reporting across the entire Microsoft suite.

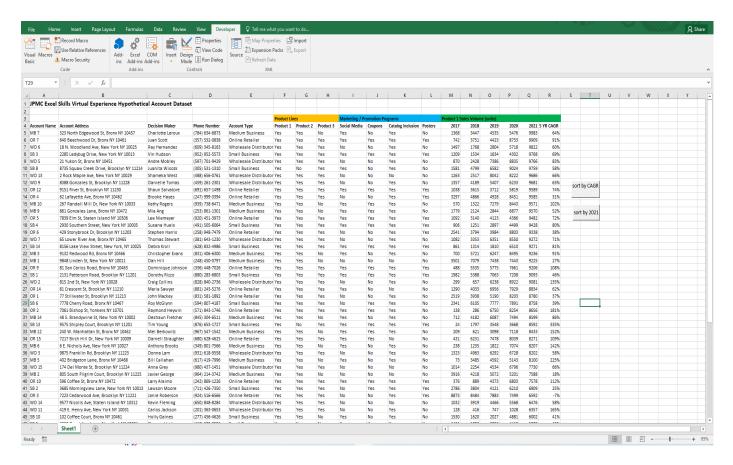
Like any programming language, VBA has its own vocabulary, syntax, and commands to learn. With VBA, you can write sophisticated programs that exceed tasks you could do manually on the keyboard and mouse. While becoming skilled at writing complex VBA programs takes many hours of training, you can learn in just a few minutes to create simple macros to automate common, repetitive tasks in Excel.

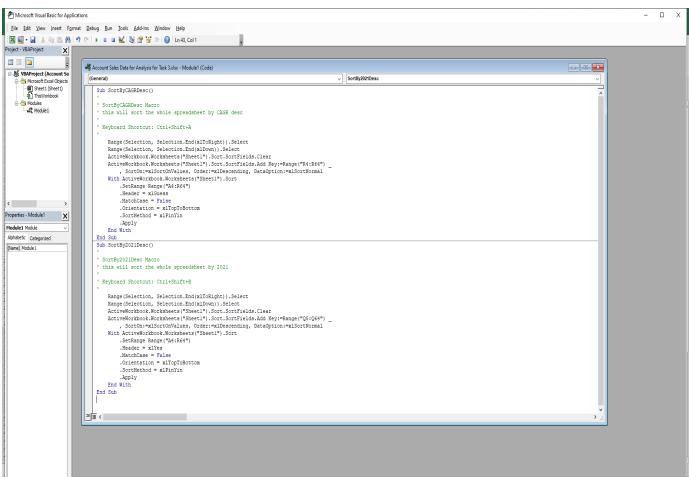
A macro is simply a short list of commands written in VBA to automate a set of tasks you could otherwise do manually using the keyboard and mouse. Excel has two methods built-in for creating macros. The easiest way is to "record" the macro, which means telling Excel to "watch" your actions as you do a task using the keyboard and mouse and automatically create a list of commands in VBA that correspond to those actions. Then, you can tell Excel to automatically run that list of commands over and over as needed. That list or script of commands is your macro, and you can assign it to a button on the screen to run it at will. The other method for creating macros is to write the list of commands (the VBA code) yourself without having Excel watch your actions and generate that list for you.

TASK-

You will create two macros and associated buttons:

- 1. A macro to sort the entire spreadsheet by 5 YR CAGR in descending order to see which accounts have the highest overall 5-year sales growth
- 2. A macro to sort the entire spreadsheet by 2021 unit sales in descending order to see which accounts have the highest overall unit sales in 2021





Task Four (background)

Build a data visualisation dashboard using charts in Excel.

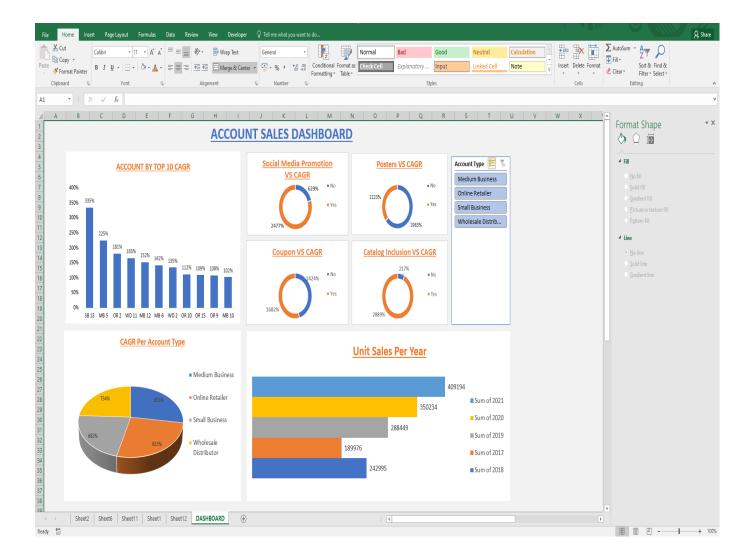
To make data-driven business decisions, the decision-makers need an easy way to understand and draw conclusions about insights from your data and analysis. Insights can be financial, operational, or related to any other management need. One of the easiest ways to make such insights quickly understandable is by using charts or graphs of the data and your analysis of it.

Business decisions that need the same insights routinely benefit from an interactive or dynamic combination of charts called a dashboard. Dashboards allow you to see different views or "slices" of the data, see how different insights relate to each other and gain a complete picture of what the data is saying. This is particularly helpful when making operational decisions like which products to market more or differently, which accounts need more sales activity to drive more sales, or which products need better inventory management to keep in stock. A dashboard is simply a collection of related charts on one page to make visualizing the data easier

TASK-

Make your data an Excel table (rather than a range). Remember the shortcut for that? It is Ctrl-T. Some of Excel's more useful capabilities work with data designated as a Table in Excel, including dynamic updating of charts and graphs and much of the pivot table functionality. It is a best practice to use Excel Tables when doing data analysis.

Be creative! Your dashboard will almost certainly look different than the Model Answer below. You will likely have chosen different ways to look at the data and combine those charts into your dashboard. The important part of this exercise is to begin thinking in the mindset of using dashboards to tell the story of your data and support the data-driven business decisions that relate to the data.



Task Five (background)

Communicate your analysis and insights using PowerPoint to tell a data-driven story.

Consider the following two statements that communicate data:

- 1. Eastern Region sales dropped 4% year over year.
- 2. Our Sales Rewards trip to the Bahamas this summer is in danger of being canceled because our team has underperformed our Eastern Region sales growth target by 9% this year!

Which statement is more compelling? Which statement motivates the reader to want to take action? Data is good, but a narrative or story told with the data is always better.

Telling a data-driven narrative allows you to directly link the issue you want to address, the insights useful to address the issue, and the action or decision you want the reader or listener to

take. This linkage depends on the listener's emotional connection to the story. The data alone does not convey an emotional connection; the narrative does that.

Telling a story with your data makes it easier to build trust, convey meaningful insight, and drive audience engagement.

Follow certain best practices when telling a data-driven story:

- Understand your audience. Who are you communicating with? What are their motivations and needs? What will they find compelling?
- Focus on a few major points. Keep your messaging clear and concise, so it's memorable.
- **Set the context for your story.** Why do your insights matter? Why should the audience care?
- Actually write a story. Stories include what is commonly called a story arc: a setup, a tension or issue, a resolution, and/or a call to action.
- Use visuals where possible. Tables of numbers are hard to make compelling.
- **Support your credibility as the storyteller.** Be honest about data quality issues, missing insights that are needed, and related risks to the action or decision you are seeking.

TASK-

write your presentation using the template found in Additional Resources below. Feel free to add slides to the template if needed, but remember: *clear*, *concise*, and *compelling*. Shorter is almost always better. In no more than 3-5 slides,

- 1. Write a compelling title to grab the attention of your audience.
- Convey a key, overarching point using a compelling visual you find online to further grab your reader's attention. Just copy and paste a photo that you find online; no need for original artwork.
- 3. Communicate key points and ideas about your account sales analysis, including sales performance (or lack thereof), opportunities for improvement or operational focus, and any other points you think tell a good data-driven story.
- 4. Make a recommendation for an action that your audience should take as a result of your analysis of account sales.

PPT attached-