Working with data to make unbiased observations, judgments, and decisions was useful in analyzing the Google Merchandise Store. There was a plethora of information to draw conclusions from regarding audience, sales, and site performance however there is additional data that can supplement these findings. A heatmap showing where users click the most, and where the “hottest” areas of the site pages are would be useful to complete the story of how users are behaving on the site overall. I would also want to clearly see the “cold” parts of the site where users aren’t navigating to. The tool can also record sessions from users so we can see exactly what path they took and where they dropped off.

The most challenging part of the analysis was remembering to view the data with a specific question or intention in mind. I found myself getting lost in the numbers, and had to take a step back. There is so much information and if you do not structure how you’re searching for data and why, then they are vanity metrics. Each number represents meaning, and a potential opportunity for improvement. Reporting on data is such that you need to highlight numbers that prove your stance on what you’re proposing the team work on as product manager. To overcome this challenge, I focused on the questions at hand. This, in turn, inspired more questions about user behavior, site speed, and user demographics that I did not initially anticipate to reflect on.

To supplement this data, I would be interested in seeing marketing research and analysis of campaign performances throughout the year. It helps to know if there was a marketing launch, promotion, or anything that could spike user engagement during a specific time frame. Understanding who the customers are from a marketing perspective and what drives them can help me make sense of why, for example, males convert more than females. Are we marketing more towards them? Why aren’t we doing female targeted marketing to increase sales from this user segment?

The most interesting insight I uncovered was that of the site speed. I could not believe that most users were shopping on chrome and the page load speed was so slow. Most of the revenue in the last 30 days was coming from shoppers on chrome so this is a concerning finding. If we lost those customers due to frustration with page speed, that could hurt sales. The page speed among the top 3 browsers overall was very slow. Most users were dropping off the site within their first interaction, and this could be due to page speed. Having a seamless, website experience includes speed, layout of information, mobile and desktop compatibility, and visual appeal. Customers expect this, it’s not a delighter. Any of these areas lacking is a high risk of losing users indefinitely.

This kind of analysis is imperative to have at your fingertips as a product manager. You are presenting information and making your case to leaders and stakeholders in the company, and having data to prove a point makes a huge impact. Data can also help get your team on board to prioritize certain projects in sprints. Data can also help set clear, actionable goals for the future. It uncovers observations that are not always obvious, and peeling back the layers to find areas of opportunity makes for a strong point of reference in setting OKR’s and KPIs that ultimately determine a company or product’s future.