The Measure Pod: #73 Starting a product analytics consultancy (with Bhavik Patel @ CAUSL)

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### Intro

[00:00:15] **Dara:** On today's episode, we have our first ever returning guest who is Bhav Patel talking to us about his new startup product measurement consultancy CAUSL.

[00:00:24] **Daniel:** We have a great chat about all things product analytics. We talk about GA4, yes, of course, we have to bring up GA4, marketing analytics and the tech stack that he uses at CAUSL. One last thing to mention before we jump into the show, [we're going to be at brightonSEO in April](https://brightonseo.com/), so that's in a couple of weeks. If you're local, if you're going, reach out to us, it'll be good to hang out, grab a coffee, grab a beer or something like that, and of course we'll be at the next CRAP Talks, whenever that happens to be. Stick around to the end of the show and hear Bhav talk about CRAP and where that's going. Alright, enjoy the show.

[00:00:51] **Dara:** Hello and welcome back to The Measure Pod, a podcast for analytics and data enthusiasts. I'm Dara, I'm CEO at Measurelab.

[00:00:58] **Daniel:** And I'm Dan, I'm an analytics consultant and trainer at Measurelab.

[00:01:02] **Dara:** We have a first today, we are joined by a returning guest who is none other than Bhav Patel. So Bhav, you were last on the show on [episode number 39](https://www.measurelab.co.uk/blog/podcasts/product-analytics-crap-talks-bhavik-patel/?utm_medium=podcast&utm_source=transcript&utm_campaign=73), believe it or not. So really great to have you back thanks for agreeing to, to join us again on The Measure Pod.

[00:01:18] **Bhav:** Thanks for having me. I feel honoured to be the first returning guest. It's the legacy I can now carry with me. So yeah, thanks for having me guys.

[00:01:24] **Daniel:** By popular demand.

[00:01:25] **Dara:** Exactly, back by popular demand. And also because we've been, and I don't want to do any spoilers here, but what we're going to be talking to you about is your new venture and we've been keeping an eye on what's been happening on LinkedIn and online. So Dan and I have been keeping an eye and talking about you, and we thought, well, why not get you back on the podcast to talk about what's happening. Because a lot's changed since the last time you were on The Measure Pod. So it's probably a good place to kick off, can you give us, as you'll remember from the first time we ask what people's journey is this time around it's going to be the more recent journey. So what's happened since you were last on the Measure Pod?

[00:01:57] **Bhav:** Yeah, I think the last time I was on the, I was on the show, I was at Hopin, which is a virtual conferencing platform. Unfortunately, we had a few rounds of redundancies at Hopin and the third round, my team and I, we were impacted by it. It was inevitable, I think the market had changed a lot, people going back to in-person events. So, you know, we were naturally going to see some type of impact on sort of commercials and things like that. So sadly, we were impacted and from that point onwards, I kind of, this was back in November by the way, so this was late November where this had happened. I think I spent about a month and a half weighing up what I, what my next options were going to look like, and the option I ultimately landed on was starting my own [product measurement consultancy called CAUSL](https://www.causl.co.uk/?utm_medium=podcast&utm_source=the_measure_pod).

[00:02:42] **Bhav:** It was a well thought through decision, I think it's a combination of leading with my heart and my head when I was thinking about what my options were going to look like. One of them was a natural horizontal movement towards another director of analytics role in another company. It was a safe bet, it was also a, it wasn't a very exciting option for me. I think I've been doing this, my role now in some way, shape, or form for about 10, 10 years-ish, I think. So that was option number one, option number two was a career change, and I won't lie this was a very real option for me. I got to late stages for a lead product manager role for a travel company. They pulled their budgets as I think many companies are doing right now and so that one didn't work out. I was also considering a product strategist role. I was also considering a role as a chief of staff.

[00:03:29] **Bhav:** And the three things that all three of these roles had in common was really the ability to influence decision making. As an analyst, we definitely have the ability to influence decisions, but when you are in a chief of staff or a product strategist position, you really play the confidant, whatever you want to call it, for the people who make decisions. Or in the case of a product manager, like lead product manager, that was, you know, that was a very real decision making role. So that was the second option, slightly more exciting, little bit more risk, but not a huge amount of risk, which brought me onto option number three, which was a consulting company and the first one of two, which was doing my own thing. This is an itch I've always wanted to scratch, I love what I've been doing at companies, which was helping them develop a product analytics function and measure the impact of their product initiatives and really drive and deliver ROI.

[00:04:15] **Bhav:** So that was, you know, that was the third option, slightly more risk, much higher levels of excitement. And the fourth option was to continue building a platform I built about six months ago called [Keynoat](https://www.keynoat.com/). I think I talked about it last time that I was on the show. Keynoat is a speaker discovery platform where event organisers, podcast hosts, people like that, can be connected to people who are in the industry you know, giving talks, sharing their knowledge and wisdom, insights, things like that. So that one came with a high level of risk, it was the most exciting option, but it also came with the highest level of risk because I would either have to commercialise the product very quickly or go through VC investment, and I just, I didn't want to go through that, so I balanced risk and excitement and that's where I landed at CAUSL.

### Topic

[00:04:57] **Dara:** Brilliant and we want to obviously hear a lot more about CAUSL, but just before we do, I think we might have done this in the show notes, but we want to give you a thank you for Keynoat actually, because we found Stacey Harper, who was a guest on the show, on Keynoat and she's now actually also doing some training for us as well.

[00:05:13] **Bhav:** No, thank you. I'm glad I did see, I saw on Twitter that Stacey's been doing some learning and development courses with you guys, so I think that's fantastic that you were able to connect. I'm happy to have helped.

[00:05:22] **Dara:** But onto CAUSL. So the reason, so I kind of alluded to this earlier, but I said that we've been keeping an eye on you, which sounds a bit creepy, but the reason we've been, the reason we've been able to, and we're not alone is you're doing everything out in the open, which is quite novel and must be a mixture of exciting and, and terrifying for you because not only have you taken the leap to set up your own business, but you're doing it very transparently. So do you want to tell us a bit about kind of the motivation behind that and also how it's going and how you're finding, building a company right out there in the open for everyone to see.

[00:05:52] **Bhav:** It was something I had thought about, should I do this or should I not? And then part of me was like, no one really wants to hear this. So I did a kind of like a very quick snap survey on LinkedIn. I think I got something like a hundred responses. And I think 78/79% was in you know, very much in favour of documenting the journey. Although maybe you haven't come across, but there are a couple of people in the industry who I've followed who have pretty much been building in public. One of them, it's a really strange journey, but he sells car mats online and he documented everything on Twitter. And I thought it was a really, I thought it was fantastic. You know, he was very much sharing his sales, he was sharing the highs of Christmas periods, actually people buying car mats over Christmas, which is interesting.

[00:06:33] **Bhav:** So that was kind of like the thing that inspired me to do this. And also there's a PR company I followed a couple of years ago who pretty much had a big bang launch. They documented most of the stuff. They were probably a lot, they were, they weren't as transparent, but a lot of what they were doing in campaigns they were running, you know, these were very big public campaigns. I'm connected to one of the founders, Steven, who's also in my early stages of launching CAUSL was someone who advised, you know, gave me some valuable pieces of advice. So the whole thing around documenting it and doing it very publicly #BuildingInPublic, I think is the official hashtag for anyone who does this type of thing, was, I was nervous that no one would really care, but actually it's been really nice for myself. I hope people get value out of it, and even if they don't, I myself have picked up a tremendous amount of value in, in doing this.

[00:07:25] **Bhav:** And this is, I think it's for two reasons. One, it allows me to have the clarity of thought, sometimes I think we have so many things running around in our head that we don't get the clarity needed to make that next step, take that decision. So just by documenting this, it's really helped me gain clarity on everything from, you know, who does my ideal customer profile look like? What are our revenue targets? What is our approach to go to market? You know, all of those types of things, it's been nice to have that. So that's the first thing, the clarity of thought and the second thing is whether this is successful or not still remains to be seen. In either instances, it's something I'll be able to look back on and remember. Actually, you know, this wasn't a fluke this was, I gave everything I had, every decision I made was carefully thought through. Every piece of insight I got that through other people in the industry and I, you know, I wanted to just document all of it so that, you know, 12 months from now I'm actually looking forward to 12 months from now, I'm not one to wish time away, but it'll be interesting to look back to see kind of like where we are now and how that journey's progressed.

[00:08:22] **Dara:** Did you intend for it to be a kind of two-way benefit? The point about the clarity of thoughts is a great one. I hadn't really thought about that. That you just, the simple act of sharing it means that you're having to kind of be quite clear and final about certain things. But I might have originally thought that it was, that the aim was to kind of help other people or get that information out there for other people to benefit from. But it sounds like it's kind of a two-way thing, you are getting a benefit from it in that you're getting input on what you're sharing and saying you're planning to do which helps kind of clarify things and also, I guess soundboard some of it, the ideas. But then the flip side is you're also getting to share with maybe other people who are planning to go on a similar journey, and it might even inspire people to go on a similar journey where they see what you're doing and think, okay, well if he can do it, I can do it.

[00:09:05] **Bhav:** And that's a good point, I think the aspiration for doing this, I think it was very much about helping people who potentially might be going through the same thing as me. The very first post I wrote it was called the woes of admin. And in England, I think it's not the easiest place in the world to start a company, as I've come to learn very quickly. Everything from incorporating, setting out accounting details and getting your accounting right, legal documents that you need to generate, insurance, all of these things, they're not the easiest things to source in terms of information. And actually, I thought to myself, anyone who is thinking about this will benefit from kind of like all of the admin setup side of things. But actually, I've realised that's just one part of it. The other parts are around the clarity of thought, getting very clear about what you want to do next, and being very conscious in the decisions you make, I think that has been the most helpful thing that people have come to me about.

[00:09:53] **Bhav:** I think I've had about five or six people who are very much in the same situation that I was in where they've either started their own thing or they're thinking about starting their own thing. Both sets of those people have really found the decision making and really thinking about something, you know, something that you probably don't think about, which is actually how do I set my revenue targets? Who is my ideal customer profile? These are probably things that they probably have in the back of their mind, but actually by documenting this, it allowed them to bring it to the forefront of their mind. Because it is very important at the early stages, and these might be things you refine over time, but actually having a view on that right from the word go it's very beneficial and I think people have recognised that, which is where it's maybe my posts have resonated quite a lot. And the outcome, which I wasn't intending to be, was just my own personal benefit, which is actually I'm documenting this. It'll be nice to look back on it a year from now, two years from now.

[00:10:42] **Daniel:** You've also got the other side, which is that it's a really effective form of marketing in a sense as well, because I was thinking about this actually because we're in a similar space, not product analytics, but more kind of marketing analytics and Google Analytics side. And it's one of the hardest things that we have to do as a consultancy, as an agency, is actually explain what analytics is and what the value of employing someone like us is and where we sit within a team. Especially teams where they don't have analytics functions, and so you are kind of suggesting that they need something that they don't already have and then it's a big sort of question mark around where that sits. So, I think having that clarity or kind of forcing yourself to have an element of clarity before you post things out there is really doing an effective job of communicating what this space is and the value that it can add.

[00:11:23] **Daniel:** So I don't know if it's, if it's directly tied, if it's measurable in a sense, in terms of the kind of sales of the business. But I saw that you got your first couple of clients, so congratulations on that, first of all. But I think there's a huge part of this, which is just helping other people understand why this is important.

[00:11:36] **Bhav:** Yeah, the marketing thing is, it's an interesting point actually. The newsletters that I write, that is really documenting and just making sure that people are, because I think so many people have committed now to come on this journey with me, I don't feel like I'd be doing the right thing by trying to sell what I'm doing via the newsletter. The newsletter is very much, is about the journey, but you're absolutely right everything else that I post on LinkedIn is, you know, there's an element of marketing on it. And historically the funny thing is, I would've posted things like this a year ago anyway, the only thing that's now in the back of my mind is actually, am I doing this because I would've done it anyway or is there a marketing incentive here?

[00:12:11] **Bhav:** And I think it's a little bit of both because obviously I think the three of us have been connected now for quite a while. So even before I just started CAUSL there were posts I was doing, which were very much, a bit tongue and cheek, sometimes informative, sometimes going quite deep into topics. So I've always kind of had that output of my work on LinkedIn, which I really like. I do it anyway, just because it helps me again, with the clarity of thought and putting things down on paper. But now I'm always conscious that I don't want to be that guy who's seen as selling things. So I try to balance my post being quite useful, informative, a bit tongue in cheek, a little bit funny, a bit silly, but also valuable and sharing the knowledge of product analytics, which I think is one of the challenges I've found right now, and I kind of knew it going into it, was, whilst I'm aware of this problem that I'm trying to solve with CAUSL in the industry. I don't think that my ideal customer or my target market is fully aware of it, and I actually feel like I'm kind of like the first one through the wall. So I'm probably going to take a few bruises, I'm probably going to have a few cuts and scars and I'm definitely developing thick skin as part of this.

[00:13:13] **Bhav:** So I think a big part of what I'm doing now has to be marketing. It has to be raising awareness about the lack of measurability in the product development space. I think in web analytics, marketing, these are such, you know, I don't think you need to sell the concept to anyone. I think anyone who is doing marketing, who is working on CRM platforms, you know, they already know that they need to measure what they're doing because they have a direct cost associated with it, which is your marketing spend. I think the product spend inverted commas, it's a bit more subtle and I think product teams have forgotten, or product leaders sometimes forget, they are spending millions of pounds building product teams, developing new features, hiring lots of people, doing design, doing research. And actually, at some point someone's going to ask, hey, what value is this adding? And I think I'm trying to pre-empt that before it gets flooded and there's lots of people doing it, I thought I'd try and be the first one through the door.

[00:14:04] **Daniel:** So that's actually a really interesting thing that's just made me think about is that when it comes to marketing analytics specifically, a lot of it is about the technology. And obviously we talk a lot on this show about Google Analytics, but there's, you know, other tools out there of course. But it's all around the tech, the implementation, the setup and the usage of the technology and a lot of focus is around that. And when it comes to product analytics, you know, there's a lot of it that is going to be obviously tech-based. You can measure the product, but I would argue that an equal amount or more is going to be around measuring the performance of the team or the kind of the objectives and the different aspects that aren't specifically in the kind of the tech product itself. So, how does that work? How do you approach that? Obviously we're not asking for any kind of trade secrets here, but like when you go in and you're doing kind of measurement of a product, I mean, how much of it is focused on, for example, the technology, the tracking and the data, and how much of that is the other side of it?

[00:14:50] **Bhav:** So I think it's important to talk about, so I don't think it's like trade secrets. Our approach on this has been very much using a structured framework that me and Nico, Nico is my co-founder, that we've created, and we apply a systems-thinking principle. So you guys probably haven't seen our proposition deck. It's, you know, something I usually send out to prospects. But the proposition deck, within that proposition deck, I talk about our approach to product analytics. The mindset that we've adopted, because it's worked at every other company I've worked at, is a systems thinking approach. And the idea of a systems thinking approach is that your company is basically a system that has a goal, which is some type of output. Usually this is going to be revenue, but it could also be customer growth, it could be conversion. Whatever it is, you have some commercial metric or output that you're trying to optimise your system towards.

[00:15:35] **Bhav:** Now your system is made up of subsystems and components, and these are things like your marketing department, product department, your analytics department, your finance team, your sales team, and all of these things. They're all working together and not everyone thinks about these things in an interconnected way. So the principles behind systems thinking is that actually each part of these subsystems are working very collaboratively, even if people don't realise it. And some of these systems are subsystems themselves. So if you think about product, product is a classic example of a subsystem within a wider system.

[00:16:04] **Bhav:** If you are using a classical tribe and squad model, you have a team which will look after one part of your website, this could be a checkout process. You have another team which looks after your discovery side. You might have a team who looks after the creation element of your product, whatever it, you know, whatever it looks like. If it's a SaaS team, you might have adoption of the product or acquisition of the product whatever it is, each of these components are effectively working together to try and improve that part of the system or the entire system, whatever it is. But in order to do something like that, you have to start from a very fundamental level, which is the ability to measure that system.

[00:16:35] **Bhav:** So this starts off with tracking. So Dan, you talked about tracking being a core component of marketing technology and marketing analytics, it's also a core component of product analytics. You don't know how your system is performing unless you can measure it, how do you measure it? So I think traditionally product teams have measured it through qualitative metrics, so you know, your NPS, your lagging indicators. And there might be some in-product qualitative measures like CES (customer effort score), that they could measure, but actually even those, you know, you don't really understand the volume of it. So doing product analytics is your quantitative measures and you need to be able to track those journeys and those digital footprints of your customers from the point where they arrive at the site to the point where they leave the site, and in between, you know, if they complete the action.

[00:17:17] **Bhav:** So that's your starting point, which is the measurability of it. The second thing is identifying the trends within your system. So how do you know what the future's going to look like if you don't know what the past looks like? So by doing your trend measurement, you start to map out and build tribal knowledge of your product, and this could be looking at like your reporting, so seasonality in your reporting, looking at trends, looking at the overall direction, are you up year on year? Are you down year on year? When are the core seasons in your product? All of those things. Once you have kind of institutional knowledge about your product performance, you're now in a better position to understand what does the future look like? How do we want to change our future? Is it going to be year on year growth? Is it going to be staying flat if you're, you know, if you're already in a decline? Is it about minimising the decline because of the macroeconomic market conditions that we're in? So that's your second layer.

[00:18:03] **Bhav:** Then you kind of go a bit, you know, further layer down, which is how are your parts interconnected with each other? So how does elements of your product drive retention? How does it drive conversion? How does it drive referrals? You know, all of those things, and you start to build a picture by doing exploratory data analysis around how each one of those components are connected to each other. There's a final layer, which is our mental models around the psychology behind why your customers are on the website and what they're there to do, and what they're trying to achieve. So, I think for product analytics, it is very new, but the way to approach it is still good processes. It's very much, you know, ensuring that you have foundations in place to be able to go that next tier down to the things you really care about, which is actually why your customers are actually there.

[00:18:43] **Dara:** That's really interesting what you said there and it made me think that, it made me think of how, in your previous roles actually, where you said this has worked really well. I would imagine you must have been in contact with all of those different parts of the system. Do you see a challenge working, because this is something we come up against, where we're working outside of that company and we're to some extent at arm's length. So are you seeing that challenge already and what do you, you know, how do you kind of imagine you will get around that, where you might be kept a little bit away from some of the decision making or away from some of those other parts of the system?

[00:19:16] **Bhav:** I think this was a real challenge, when I was approaching this, I definitely thought about this as a challenge. Like, how am I going to overcome the internal bureaucracy or, you know, whatever you want to call it, of navigating a company’s organisation. The way that we've been working with our clients is really to help them understand what is the output they want to try and get to. Because the product is, you know, such a core component of the company, they've had very good buy-in from people around them. So these last few weeks we've been knee-deep in stakeholder interviews. You know, I think we've conducted something in the region about 12 hours of stakeholder interview questions and interviews over the course of two or three weeks.

[00:19:52] **Bhav:** And the people present in those calls has been quite diverse, you know, we've had people who are in operations, we've spoken to people who are in product and design, and we've spoken to like CTO and things like that. So I think having access to those people just to kind of inform them about what we're doing has been really useful, the transparency about what we're doing has been really helpful. We were able to ask them all of the questions we needed to do our job, but actually the buy's been really good, and I only need about an hour with each one of those people to help me understand how the companies operationally work. Because once you understand how a company operationally works, you can start to pull together the foundations of what you need for product analytics.

[00:20:32] **Bhav:** Now, the approach that Nico and I have is really around, we want to tie product to revenue. Now, this is something that actually marketing analytics, people like yourselves, are really good at because you already, you know, you know that you have some cost you've got access to, and you want to deliver some return. Now your goal isn't to spend the marketing budget, your goal is to deliver a return on your client's investment. In some ways, what I'm doing with product analytics, it's exactly the same. It's maybe not as clear cut as it is in marketing, where you've spent X and you've delivered Y, but through other indicators where we're tying usage of a specific feature to retention, to revenue, to something like that, we can loosely start to tie the product to commercial outcomes.

[00:21:17] **Daniel:** Yeah, I think that's re really clear Bhav, but if I may put us off on a bit of a technical tangent and yes, if you're following The Measure Pod drinking game, this is where you get to take a shot because I'm going to mention GA4. So something that we've noticed, especially over the last couple of years with the rise of Google's App + Web and thus GA4, is that it's kind of bringing it in line with the kind of the product analytics world in terms of the data schema. So this kind of event schema, you know, the mix panels, the segments, the heaps, that kind of stuff. What we're finding now is that a lot of people are maybe not realising it, but they're now using a kind of product analytics tool to do a lot of this stuff. I think of it more of sort like a whiplash, the whiplash from Universal Analytics to Google Analytics 4 is actually now get used to this event schema.

[00:21:55] **Daniel:** Everyone that's either worked on apps or product analytics and other tools, they're probably like, about time, about time it's, you know, brought up to line with stuff. But I want to get your kind of view or your opinion on this because it's more and more I find myself doing well, maybe not to the extent you are, but doing product analytics or, or at least, you know, website and app product analytics. Where we are measuring, using a tool that's kind of designed to do this kind of stuff, which traditionally is a marketing tool, but now is kind of twofold. There's two questions there Bhav, one is like, do you see this becoming a more predominant tool set within the marketing analytics space? If so, do you think that this could disrupt it, or do you think the mix panel people are going to stay loyal and this won't disrupt too much.

[00:22:33] **Bhav:** So I'll answer each question separately. I don't think this will be a disruption, I think one of the things that people have realised, Google had the monopoly on the marketing element of it. So where Google was really strong was connecting UTM parameters and all of those type of things, the offline activity and being able to accurately indicate where your traffic has come from. And I think this is, you know, in companies I've worked at, we've had the product analytics tool, which has always been stronger than Universal Analytics, but they've always had an instance of Google on the platform because it's so much easier to track where people are coming from. I don't know if Google have made a wrong strategic decision here, I mean I'm far from the authority to talk about this, but moving to GA4 and moving towards a moral event-based model, I don't know if they've made it complicated for people who really just wanted to understand where their traffic was coming from.

[00:23:24] **Bhav:** And I've been playing around with GA4 a bit myself on the CAUSL website, plus on the CRAP Talks website. It's not the most intuitive platform, like Google are much smarter than me, they probably know what they're doing, but I'm an end user of the platform, and I've been using platforms like Amplitude and similar for quite some time. And they're intuitive to me, I know when I want to build a funnel, I know how to build a cohort, I know how to do trend analysis, and I could do some of that loosely, maybe not to a great depth on Universal Analytics. But my primary goal for Universal Analytics was really around where is my traffic coming from? How is it converting? What does the attribution model look like? Even if it was, you know, you might have a fancy attribution model, but Google's one was good enough in some instances to give you, you know, kind of like a first touch, last touch, even distribution, whatever you want to call it, attribution model.

[00:24:10] **Bhav:** And I think in some ways they've actually made it really difficult for themselves, because the people who were paying for Universal Analytics were the marketing teams, you know. They obviously, they cared about how things are working on their platform and how people are doing, but it was really around like, how is my marketing spend doing right? How do we continue to optimise marketing spend? I don't know if the adoption towards GA4 will be as easy for marketers who now have to switch their way of thinking to a more events-based model. I think that's going to be the hard thing. On the plus side marketing teams should be thinking about this as a way to leverage more data now to be able to do their jobs even more effectively.

[00:24:48] **Bhav:** So if you think about the notion of product-led growth, previously, you might do retargeting based on someone who's come to your website and maybe they've come a couple of times whatever. And you might have some rudimentary measures in place that allow you to do some retargeting if they've done X, Y, and Z. But actually, event-based targeting allows you to really go deeper into creating cohorts of users who have shown real intent on purchasing, or do you know, doing what you want them to do on your platform by using more event-based tracking. And this could be really going in depth into product usage, and this is stuff that you couldn't really do before on Universal Analytics. So I think in some ways GA4 is an opportunity for marketers to do their job in a slightly more scientific way, even more advanced way. And you know, just beyond sort of like marketing traffic you know, splits.

[00:25:32] **Bhav:** Is this an issue for the Mixpanels, the Amplitudes, the Heaps? I don't think it is. I think the audiences for GA are still very different to the audiences for Amplitude, Mixpanel, Heap. I think the lines are definitely blurring. Dan, you mentioned yourself that you are spending more time doing product analytics. That's probably because you now can through GA4. If you know, if Google hadn't moved to GA4, you probably wouldn't be spending as much time, unless your clients were using another tool as well. So, I don't think this will be an issue for big companies, I think where they might compete on is things like pricing if Google are cheaper. Moving to an event-based model still requires a lot of strategic thinking, you still need to design your schema, you still need to plan out what you want to do. I think on top of the products themselves, which are probably much better than Google for this, you also get a ton of knowledge that comes with it from your account managers who can help you build those schemas and things like that. So, I don't know, let's see, it's my really crap answer.

[00:26:25] **Daniel:** No, it is interesting. It's like we're, you know, we're in the world of app analytics as well, you know, iOS and Android apps too, because GA4 is now compatible and people are rolling it out. Because I think there's the one side of which you touched on there is that, you know, everyone has Google Analytics on their websites and now apps and their products because it's free, that's the fundamental thing, or at least there's a free version, which is widely accessible and widely used, and I think that's the interesting thing. I think if there's you know, dedicated product teams or analytics teams, they might invest in it, they might buy a tool that is better. And I think if there's any level of financial investment, people take it more seriously as well. I think what I'm going to be interested in seeing, just like it's happening at the moment in the app space, but within the product space as well, is just the extent of where everyone always has Google Analytics, even if they're using other tools. We've had lots of conversations on this podcast with people that are using Adobe Analytics and I've worked with companies that are doing that as well, but they always still have Google Analytics in the background right? Because there's still a, a need or a kind of, why not it's free or you know, it's easy to do.

[00:27:20] **Daniel:** Yeah, it's just going to be interesting, isn't it? Like you said at the beginning, it's like in the next couple of years we're going to look back on the memories of this and be like, do you remember when we just did sessions and conversion rates, you know, now we're doing all sorts of iOS app installation attribution and product analytics. It's going to be an interesting couple of years with this, especially as the switch off of Universal Analytics and the craziness will continue, I'm sure.

[00:27:41] **Bhav:** Again, I think one of the big challenges that people have to like completely switch off their enterprise solution will be that a lot of these platforms have historical data, the value of historical data sometimes is worth more than the upfront cost of storing that. And I think it'll be tough to get rid of. I'm very much a believer in fragmenting your stack. If you've only got Google Analytics, then everything's gone through without the move to GA4 it's really, you know, you're kind of in a hostage situation now. I posted about this very recently, I much prefer a fragmented approach where you've got some data pipeline, some behavioural data pipeline, like Snowplow or Segment or something like that, where you've captured your data. You can enrich it, you know, people also forget about the enrichment opportunity that comes with doing product analytics and moving away from tools like GA. And even like native implementation of things like Amplitude, when you've got a data pipeline, you are able to enrich your data with more information about your customers through your data warehouse, like through some type of like connection to your SQL databases.

[00:28:37] **Bhav:** And then you push that to your Amplitude, your Mixpanel, your Heap, whatever it might look like. So actually, you've got much richer data set and it's accessible to everyone. Obviously, if it's only staying in your data warehouse and no one can access it except your data scientists or your data analysts it, you know, it defeats the purpose of doing a lot of this. But if you're capturing it, enriching it, storing it in your own data warehouse first, and then pushing it to some type of third party vendor like Google or whatever, then you're in a situation where actually you're not held hostage. You can actually migrate from platform to platform, and you retake power as the customer. I think right now the vendors hold all the power. Don't get me wrong, I have great relationship with lots of vendors that I work with, but I think right now there's a bit too much power in terms of like Google Analytics and people are realising that now.

[00:29:17] **Bhav:** I was speaking to a potential client just last week, and they're now in this situation where they've built their entire data stack on Google, and Optimize being sunsetted, they're moving from Universal Analytics to GA4, and now they're in a situation where like, they don't even hold any of that data. It all sits within Google, so do they stick with Google, retain that data with a sub-par product. Or, do they take that leap of faith now move to something else, pay for it, not use the free version and take ownership of the data. My advice to them was to like own that data and not be held hostage again in the future.

[00:29:50] **Dara:** That's really interesting, because we've had that conversation both Dan and I, and with previous guests as well, where we've suspected that starts to happen because for the first time Google are saying, you know, your historical data, that's down to you to figure out, you've got to export that and store it somewhere. So, this might actually present the first real opportunity for some companies, I think a lot of companies are still just going to stick with Google, it's what they know, everybody's familiar with the data, at least to some extent, all the business reports run on it, so they're going to stick with it. But there's probably that percentage of companies who are going to think, do you know what actually, they're sunsetting products, they're forcing us to export our historical data, now's the time to make that shift. It's interesting hearing you say that you're having kind of real-world conversations about exactly that.

[00:30:32] **Dara:** I wanted to ask you, and I think you've kind of probably given the answer without explicitly saying it, but I get the impression at CAUSL, you're pretty vendor agnostic. I know you mentioned Amplitude quite a bit, so there's probably tools that come up more often than not. Are you kind of happy to work with various different product analytics tools? Also, you mentioned things like Segment. I know last time you were on, you talked about Redshift, but I guess you'd be happy to work with data in BigQuery as well. Are you pretty comfortable with all the kind of main vendors?

[00:31:00] **Bhav:** Yeah I mean, you know, I've always said like, ‘tools not maketh the man’ right? It's how you use them ultimately, so it doesn't really matter. There are some instances where you have to like quickly upskill to get on board with a tool that you have potentially never used before. But you know, a lot of these tools are not a million miles away from each other in terms of how they perform. There might be some nuances within the platform, and we don't actually have any specific relationship with anyone, I talk about Amplitude just because I'm familiar with the platform from historical companies. But Segments, Snowplow from a data pipeline perspective. I just, I know them, that's why I talk about them very openly is not, you know, there's no commercial agreements. My co-founder is like super smart when it comes to like the more tactical side of things, so he can get in and out of whatever database you're using very quickly. I'll spend most of my time on the strategic side of things, whereas Nico is definitely more technical than I am.

[00:31:47] **Daniel:** So Bhav, we can't have you on the podcast and not ask about CRAP Talks. It's one of our favourite meetups, and I know you are the kingpin behind it all at the moment. So, what's the latest? What's going on? And when can we expect the next meetup?

[00:31:57] **Bhav:** Great question, I think we're trying to organise one in Manchester right now, and it's been a while since we've done that, I think it's just obviously the pandemic ruined everything. Unfortunately, my focus the last couple of months has been CAUSL, it's just naturally where I've had to spend a lot of my time. In the absence of a paid salary and a paid job, making this work and be successful has been my biggest goal. That being said, I am going to revive CRAP Talks and have one again later on this year. I think realistically what I might do is I might do a big one. One of my dreams has always been to run a big CRAP conference. I might rebrand it CAUSL just for marketing purposes, what have you, but it'll effectively be under the CRAP Talks umbrella. But I really, really, really want to do a big, big conference. I've never done one, I've been toying with the idea for a while. I've been too much of a wimp to take the leap to organise the big, big conference. Meetups are like my safe space, I know them very well, they're intimate, they're fun. There's no pressure of venues and, you know, sponsors and any of that stuff. With doing a big conference, it might be interesting to see if I can replicate the CRAP Talks magic on a much wider platform.

[00:32:58] **Bhav:** And I mean, for anyone that's listening I should note that Dan is actually a CRAP Talks organiser. He's now a CRAP organiser. We restarted CRAP Talks after a couple of years off towards the backend of last year (2022). We did three events and Dan was the one that greeted you at the door and welcomed you in and made sure you had a name badge and all sorts, and pointed you to a direction of the drinks and helped tidy it up at the end. So thanks, Dan, for all your help.

[00:33:18] **Daniel:** Maybe that's why no one's come back.

[00:33:19] **Bhav:** But no, we definitely will. On your point around like the CRAP conference, I think of course that is nice, but I think as I'm building CAUSL, obviously there's the newsletter now, which last week hit the 900 subscriber mark. It's called Causal Effect. It's a nice, it has a nice marketing ring to it, so this might be the CAUSL Effect conference, I haven't quite decided, but if we, if I do stay on the CRAP umbrella, of course it's going to be ‘CRAP conference’.

[00:33:41] **Daniel:** Yes, awesome. That's good to know, that's good to know.

### Wind down

[00:33:43] **Dara:** And you've answered what would've been my next question, I'm going to give you a chance to add more in if you want, but usually we'd ask how people can find out a bit more about you or get in touch. You mentioned the newsletter, both Dan and I are signed up to it, and it's really good content, I'd highly recommend that anyone listening also signs up. Any other plugs you want to make, Bhav, the website, how people can get in touch with you.

[00:34:03] **Bhav:** If you want to get in touch with me, I'm active on [Twitter @dodonerd](https://twitter.com/DodoNerd). On LinkedIn, [I'm fairly active on LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dodonerd/), but it's only a fraction of my content. Usually I use Twitter as my testing ground and if it does well on Twitter, it's probably going to do well on LinkedIn, so I then repeat it. So yeah, [causl.co.uk](https://www.causl.co.uk/?utm_medium=podcast&utm_source=the_measure_pod) is the website if you want to learn more. But yeah, I mean everything you'd probably want to know, you can probably find through my social media anyway.

[00:34:25] **Daniel:** Definitely follow Bhav on Twitter and LinkedIn. He's also got a really good creative streak and the pictures you draw accompanying your posts are amazing as well, so I wanted to call that out because I enjoy those just as much as the posts themselves.

[00:34:37] **Dara:** Amazing. Well, thank you again for coming back on the show, Bhav, and you will forever now be our first returning guest nobody can ever, ever take that away from you.

[00:34:46] **Bhav:** Oh, I love that. I'm going to have that on like my tombstone, here lies Bhav, dad, husband, first returning guest on The Measure Pod.

### Outro

[00:34:56] **Dara:** That's it for this week, to hear more from me and Dan on GA4 and other analytics related topics, all our previous episodes are available in our archive at [measurelab.co.uk/podcast](https://www.measurelab.co.uk/podcast/?utm_medium=podcast&utm_source=transcript&utm_campaign=73), or you can simply use whatever app you're using right now to listen to this, to go back and listen to previous episodes.

[00:35:14] **Daniel:** And if you want to suggest a topic for something me and Dara should be talking about, or if you want to suggest a guest who we should be talking to, there's a [Google Form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMwfzg9TdNKeZYRxHci_y0D9up4EyAL5zNMYZNE9P_82fz3Q/viewform) in the show notes that you can fill out and leave us a note. Or alternatively, you can just email us at podcast@measurelab.co.uk to get in touch with us both directly.

[00:35:31] **Dara:** Our theme is from Confidential, you can find a link to their music in the show notes. So on behalf of Dan and I, thanks for listening, see you next time.