

COLUMNS

Real-time app analytics uncover the why behind mobile metrics

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Decision makers in leading businesses understand the value of accurate data that reflects current conditions. In many industries, the ability to gather and analyze data in real time has become essential for decision support in virtually every department across the enterprise.

A variety of analytics tools have gained popularity for helping marketers separate the noise from relevant metrics so they can better understand key performance indicators (KPIs) and stay competitive in today's information-rich environment. But these tools do not always tell the whole story.

Couching in analysis

Marketing professionals face unique challenges in this area. It can be difficult for them to obtain an accurate picture of the factors that contribute to the success or failure of campaigns and initiatives, especially on mobile platforms.

Tracking mobile applications is significantly different from traditional enterprise data analysis and company Web site monitoring.

The time- and location-sensitive nature of the information that mobile apps provide signals a need for a paradigm shift with respect to the measurement tools that mobile product managers, app developers, marketers and analytics teams use.

To accurately track performance and support intelligent decision-making, mobile marketers need to be updated in real time with information that identifies the reasons behind the numbers.

Traditional quantitative analytics solutions such as Google Analytics fall short in this area because they emphasize raw metrics. They can help explain what happened, but since they do not drill down into user experience and behavior they will not reveal why specific actions are taken.

For example, traditional analytics can show that during the onboarding experience users quit the app from the third tutorial screen. But those tools will not reveal why users do not complete the onboarding process and convert into active users.

An advanced analytics solution that addresses the user experience (UX) can show that users attempt to progress to the next tutorial screen but the Next button is unresponsive, causing users to abandon the app.

Further, some traditional analytics solutions may delay app usage tracking by a few hours. App developers and publishers need to track this data in real time so they can optimize apps before it is too late and users are lost.

Marketers, developers and analysts need to know what is working and what is not in real time so that problems can be fixed. First impressions count. A bad user experience rarely leads to users giving the app a second chance.

Real-time data to quantify performance and take action

To be effective, a mobile analytics platform should provide real-time information about data points such as user engagement, retention, conversions and in-app purchases that accurately depict the success and ROI of mobile campaigns. It should provide answers to key questions so the appropriate action can be identified and taken, as in the following examples:

Where are top users located?

o Action: Optimize mobile campaigns by targeting top-quality users based on geographic KPIs and benchmarks.

Which users engage with in-app events?

o Action: Classify the quality of users by the ways they interact with apps. Identify the sources that deliver users who perform actions that support your goals and optimize your campaigns accordingly.

Which media sources provide active and loyal users?

o Action: Align budgets with sources that deliver results. Target ads to loyal users that reflect their interests.

Which sources deliver the most revenue?

o Action: Evaluate the success of campaigns by identifying which media sources deliver the most revenue.

Why do users quit the app?

o Action: Identify and fix problems that prevent users from completing relevant processes within the app that increase campaign ROI.

Understand user experience to drive successful mobile campaigns

Mobile marketers face a key challenge of streamlining time-consuming data analysis processes so that mobile apps can be optimized effectively.

User experience analytics improve productivity by enabling a deep dive into user behavior to reveal problems and essentially allowing marketers and product managers to see the app from the perspective of the users.

User experience analytics solutions provide actionable insights that can move businesses forward by not only indicating exactly what the issues are, but also suggesting which measures need to be taken to correct them.

Essential features that support these insights include user recordings, touch heatmaps and UI analysis reports.

With so many mobile apps to choose from, users will keep only those that deliver flawlessly.

A GREAT UX helps an app stand out from its competition. Accordingly, app developers, publishers, marketers and analysts should be prepared to shift to a new generation of mobile analytics solutions that evaluate user experience.

These solutions leverage real-time data to help companies optimize the UX in mobile apps so that they can improve their key metrics and drive campaign ROI.

With the right solutions in hand, mobile marketers can obtain a clearer picture of users, sources and activity so that they can improve campaigns, maximize ROI and provide a better experience for customers.

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