SNOWPLOW**INSIGHTS

COMPARISON WHITEPAPER

Snowplow Insights **VS** Enterprise Digital Analytics Products

A fundamentally different approach to digital analytics. Snowplow takes the traditional web analytics approach popularized by applications like Adobe and GA360 and turns it on its head.

Background

The Enterprise Web Analytics space is dominated by two titans: Adobe Analytics, part of the Adobe Marketing Cloud (formerly Omniture) and Google Analytics 360 (GA360), the Premium sibling to Google Analytics, the free and highly popular digital analytics tool.

Both Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics are end-to-end web analytics reporting solutions: you integrate their Javascript tracker on your website(s), and you get reports in their user interfaces. Both added on support for tracking and reporting on mobile app analytics. Both can be used to track non-web or mobile events. With both it is possible to access your underlying data: in the case of GA360 in BigQuery, and in the case of Adobe it is possible to have them deliver event-level logs to S3 daily or hourly, or stream the data in real time to an HTTP endpoint.

In contrast, Snowplow Insights is not an end-to-end digital analytics solution: it is a data collection and processing platform. It is built from the ground up to support event collection across any platform, with web and mobile just two popular platforms. (Email, displays ads, push notifications, call center, help desk, in-store, Smart Car, Smart Home, Internet of Things are some of the other supported platforms.) It is not a SaaS product: every Snowplow Insights user has their own data pipeline running on their own AWS account. This gives each user complete freedom to define what events they want to record, how those events should be structured and how they want to process them. Snowplow Insights delivers the data directly to the locations where it is most useful: into our client's own data warehouse and own Unified Log (real-time event stream in Amazon Kinesis). Our clients then choose what they want to do with the data, with what tools.

A fresh approach
to reporting

Both Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics have an extensive set of out-of-the-box reports. They also support extending the standard data collection with additional data points (custom dimensions and measures in GA360, eVars and sProps in Adobe) and building custom reports out of a combination of the standard and extended data set.
However, all reporting is based on a set of fundamental assumptions about:

· What questions a company wants to ask. These are questions like: how much traffic do I have? Where has it come from? What fraction of it has "converted"?

· Who a user is. For GA360 and Adobe, a user is nearly always a cookie ID, or a device identifier, rather than an individual tracked across different platforms and channels.

· How to divide activity into discrete units of analysis. For GA360 and Adobe the answer is a "session", where a session is some period of activity that ends with 30 minutes of inactivity, and/or a user re-entering the website from a mobile app through an external link.

AT SNOWPLOW, WE BELIEVE THAT THOSE ASSUMPTIONS ARE MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, SIMPLY WRONG. WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY COMPANY IS DIFFERENT, IN TERMS OF:

- What questions a company wants to ask. A newspaper publisher will want to know how best to setup their paywall, or how best to segment audience for advertisers, to maximize revenue. A dating company or jobs board will want to understand how to match users. A retailer will want to know which products to promote to which users. A subscription business will want to understand the drivers of retention and churn, and measure the impact of different measures on driving up retention / reducing churn.

- What data should be collected. The data collected by a dating site will look nothing like the data from a banking application or a jobs board.

- How to identify users and segment users. Again, a totally different type of segmentation will be appropriate for a banking app than a dating site.

- How to divide journeys up into discrete units of analysis. A SaaS business, for example, will want to distinguish users who've come to their website to engage with their product, with those who have come to their website because they are prospective customers, or those who've come to their website looking for support.

We do not believe in a one size fits all approach. Instead, our platform gives our users the freedom to decide what they want to track, what questions they want to answer, and how they want to process and analyze the data to answer those questions.

This means that setting up reporting in Snowplow is more work than GA360 and Adobe Analytics, because:

1. You have to decide what questions you want to answer

3. You have to decide what data you want to track

5. You have to decide how you want to use that data to answer those questions.

The enormous advantage is that once you've gone through the above process, you have a set of reports that answer the questions that matter to your business. This is enormously empowering.

A world of data possibilities beyond reporting

Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics are first and foremost reporting products.

Snowplow Insights is a data collection platform. For us, reporting is one use of the data. Other uses include:

- Building predictive models e.g. churn models, or lifetime value models. These are useful both because of the insight they provide but also because they are very actionable: enabling companies to set bid prices on acquisition channels, or intervene in user journeys to reduce the chances that they churn.

- Building recommendation or personalization services

- Building other data-driven applications e.g. marketing automation

IN ALL THE ABOVE USES WE WISH TO DO MORE THAN VISUALIZE THE DATA: WE WISH TO ACT ON THE DATA.

TO DO ANY OF THE PREVIOUS
LISTED WITH GA360 OR ADOBE,
YOU WOULD NEED TO:

1. Extract the underlying data from
    GA360 or Adobe.

3. Decide on the appropriate product /
    service / technology to build the
    predictive model / personalization
    service / market automation
    service.

5. Transform the data into the
    appropriate format to feed the
    product / service / technology. This
    is often not trivial, because the
    format of the underlying data in
    both Adobe and GA360 reflects the
    requirements of the user interfaces
    of those products.

IN CONTRAST,
SNOWPLOW DELIVERS
YOUR DATA TO YOU:

· In a clean, highly structured
· format that is easy to process.

· Directly into your data warehouse,
  so you can transform it directly.

· Into your Unified Log (in Amazon
  Kinesis), so you can transform it
  directly and feed it directly into as
  many different products, services
  and applications as you want, in
  real-time

Putting digital data to non-reporting uses is so much easier in Snowplow than
GA or Adobe that many of our users run Snowplow alongside GA and Adobe,
using Snowplow for advanced reporting and to power data-driven applications,
and their legacy web analytics provider to deliver the standard web and mobile
analytics reports.

SNOWPLOWINSIGHTS

DATA COLLECTION DONE RIGHT

Snowplow Insights puts you in control of your data collection. You decide what you want track. We deliver that data to you, in your own data warehouse, so you can ask any question of your data, perform any analysis, use any analytics tool. We surface your data to you, in real-time, so you can act on it.

Set your team free to use data to differentiate.

SNOWPLOW

DIFFERENTIATE WITH DATA