# Case study: how Simply Business is joining up all customer touch points into a single user journey with Snowplow

Introduction

Stewart Duncan, Director of Data Science at Simply Business, and Dani Sola, Data Architect at Simply Business, talked to Snowplow about how they are using the its platform to join up key business data at a very granular, event level to better understand the customer journey and use that insight to better serve customers at different points in their journey.

"The Snowplow dataset has become part of our core strategic offering".
Stewart Duncan, director of Data Science, Simply Business
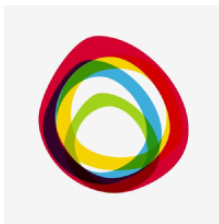
About Simply Business

Simply Business is the UK's leading insurance broker for small businesses, with over 400,000 businesses and landlords protected through them. They are proud of their award-winning claims service and especially of their customer feedback.

http://www.simplybusiness.co.uk/

Award winning tech & data team

Simply business is also recognized across the industry as a technology and data innovator.

At the Data, Analytics & Technology Awards for Insurance 2015, Simply business won Business Intelligence Project of the Year, for a system called Aerie (Analytic Event Recording for Insight and Exploration) of which Snowplow is a critical component. Simply Business managed to beat the big insurers with a much smaller team, which highlights the team's savvy and the strength of the Snowplow architecture.

"Data's at the heart of everything we do - from product improvements to how we shape the future of the company. Our nomination as a Data Analytics Excellence Award finalist was a testament to how we gather, harness and learn from our data" (Insurance Times Tech & Innovation Awards 2016).

http://www.simplybusiness.co.uk/about-us/awards/

Challenges

Customer experience, and associated data, fragmented across multiple channels

Simply Business engages with its customers through a variety of channels including:

- PPC, affiliate and other digital marketing channels: Simply Business uses a range of digital marketing channels to acquire new users, with ads typically driving users to their website
- Website: a key channel to attract new customers via marketing campaigns, inform them of different products through comparison tools and guides and provide quotes.
- Telephone: Simply Business runs a large call centre. Often users start to buy their insurance online, but since the buying process is long and complex, purchases are frequently completed over the telephone.
- Email: one of the most influential channels that plays an important nurturing role.

In order to understand who each user is, what he / she is trying to accomplish and how well Simply Business is serving those users needs at different points in their journeys, it was essential that Simply Business build a single customer view across the above channels. Unfortunately, prior to adopting Snowplow, that was simply impossible using both Google Analytics and Omniture.

No data ownership

For a data driven company like Simply Business it was important to have access to the underlying data so to understand the customer journey issues at individual customer level.

> *"Collecting, storing and owning your own granular data is the most important thing you can do. With the traditional Software as a Service (SaaS) most of it is a silo and you can't turn that into something much more powerful very easily".*

Data processing too slow to action

Simply Business did not want *just* to build an understanding of their users across their entire customer journey: they wanted to be able to intervene in that journey to better serve their users. Being able to process data in real-time, and use it to drive both the customer experience on the website and inform call center staff assisting customers and prospective customers was an incredibly important requirement.

Simply Business + Snowplow = state-of-the-art data capability

A comprehensive picture of the customer

With Snowplow, Simply Business can do more than just web analytics and has been able to join up different data streams to create a unified view of the customers and the business.

"We cancelled our Google Analytics premium subscription because we have migrated everything into Snowplow, as it has a lot more power and flexibility", says Stewart.

Measuring marketing channel impact to optimize marketing spend

With Snowplow, Simply Business can identify the individual paths taken by users, the channels they interacted with, the frequency of contacts and whether that process led to a purchase. With this information, they can measure more accurately, for each channel, the influence each channel has on the conversion funnel and the Return On Advertising Spending.

Simply Business has built a multi-channel attribution model on top of their Snowplow data that illuminates the impact of different channels on assisting users through different parts of the purchase funnel, and use this to optimize the allocation of spend across their different marketing channels.

See Stewart's presentation at an earlier Snowplow London Meetup for more information about this and how they are using Snowplow.

Empowering the product team to easily identify and resolve on-site issues

"Being able to capture everything a user does, gives our product team the ability to understand where particular questions sets are causing problems, which you would not get from normal solutions".

"With the tracking we can zoom in where in the form users have the issue and then aggregate that to understand how many people experience that and how much of a friction point it is. That is powerful".

A/B test updates to products to enable systematic, data-driven improvements in the user experience

Simply Business has built an A/B testing framework on top of their Snowplow data, so that updates to their website can be rigorously tested before being rolled out. This ensures that the cumulative impact of regular updates to the website is a sustained and systematic improvement in customer experience and revenue growth over time.

"Pretty much everyone at Simply Business uses Snowplow, especially the product development team. They use that continuously, every day, to analyse the user journey and question set. Even the core metrics we use for our management reporting at board level are aggregations from the Snowplow data".

Adapting the data pipeline as the business evolves

Simply Business is an innovative, agile business that is constantly evolving. Their Snowplow Analytics stack has evolved with them

"Being able to change the enrichment logic (adapting it as the business evolves) was really key for us. When you get an off the shelf tool, you don't get to do that".

Optimizing the effectiveness of their call center teams

To prioritize which prospective customers and customers get outbound calls first (and targeted on via other customer-specific channels), Simply Business has a lead scoring model using their Snowplow data. They analyze at engagement levels and model the data up to generate a probability of conversion on a lead by lead basis.

"We will target everybody who has a high probability of conversion, but has not converted, through other marketing channels. It is about maximising the return from our sales efforts".

Empowering call center staff with real-time data customer data

Using the Snowplow real-time pipeline, Simply Business has been able to provide call center staff not just with a prioritized list of prospects to call but also detailed, up to the minute data about who the prospect is, what actions they've taken on the website and what product they're interested in, empowering call center staff to provide the best possible customer service and close as many new deals as possible.

See the presentation slides and video of Dani Solà Lagares, Data Architect at Simply Business, at a recent Snowplow London Meetup about more information about this.

"The best thing about the Snowplow platform is its modularity. The thinking around event structures and event schemas is miles ahead of the industry. It is designed so well at an engineering level. Our engineers love it. You are building a community of passionate people".

Personalizing the website experience using real-time behavioral data

Simply Business uses Snowplow behavioural data to personalize the site experience for individual users, enabling Simply Business to provide a more relevant experience to its myriad different users across different sectors at different points in the purchase funnel.

Build out data capability fast

The Simply Business team were surprised by how fast they were able to build on top of Snowplow and use the data to deliver real business value.

"The Snowplow framework provides so much of the starting blocks that you don't have to have many data engineers. You take the risk out because you don't pay a large chunk of money upfront for a long implementation. And you give the technologists the chance to get their hands on something very quickly. We got the Snowplow framework up and running so quickly".

If you would like to know more about how Snowplow might help you, visit our website (http://snowplowanalytics.com/) or get in touch (contact@snowplowanalytics.com).