

EMBEDDED ANALYTICS IN ACTION

Today's data-driven businesses are looking to deploy embedded analytic solutions as value-added offerings to their customers. When it comes to embedding data, there are a few key considerations (build vs. buy being the biggest one). Learn how ISCS, Urban Airship, and Campus Logic were able to rapidly implement the right analytics solutions for their customers, while managing costs and keeping engineers focused on advancing their core products.

The Rise of Embedded Analytics

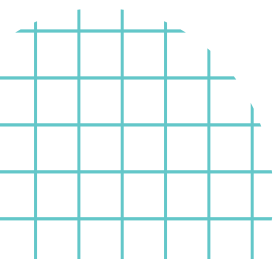
Although the concept of embedded analytics has been around for years, demand for embedded analytics solutions has recently gained substantial momentum. Businesses are becoming more data-centric and consumers are becoming more data-savvy, leading to the expectation that data should be everywhere.

Additionally, software as a service (SaaS) has given rise to a new set of use cases for embedded analytics. It's no longer just about account or usage statements. SaaS providers are looking for ways to differentiate themselves from their competition; in-depth and easy-to-use analytics for customers makes a great differentiator. Additionally, for many online businesses, data they provide to their customers is an asset with monetary value in its own right. If a business creates a rich and interactive data experience for their customers, it not only helps to guarantee customer satisfaction and loyalty, it can represent a new revenue stream that impacts their bottom line and drives growth.

The Implementation Dilemma

Product managers have to stay on top of changing customer needs and emerging threats from competitors in order to meet the customers' requirements and carve out a unique market position. Within SaaS organizations, product teams face intense pressure to deliver and continuously improve their core products, and implementing embedded analytics is a great way to do that. The development team then needs to deliver the product to the specifications laid out by the product manager. This involves an initial implementation and then ongoing iterations and maintenance as requirements change.

An initiative like embedded analytics can present difficulties for product managers and development teams alike. While product managers often see the potential value in an embedded offering, they may lack the analytics experience needed to articulate and understand the complexities of the full solution. The development team, meanwhile, may be so focused on keeping the product current, that they don't have the bandwidth to develop a new value-added service.






Build vs. Buy?

When taking on this kind of project, the first thing you have to decide is whether you want to build or buy the embedded analytic solution. Taking the build approach allows you total control of the process, while providing a solution that maps precisely to your business and its needs. But the execution is always messy. It's going to be a long time before you have anything you can show to customers, since you're basically building from scratch. And while it might seem like building yourself is cheaper, since there's no explicit price-tag attached, engineers are expensive! Building always ends up being more effort and taking more time than expected.

While the buy approach won't give you the total control that you get when you build your own solution, it will get you up and running much faster and for less money. Furthermore, buying means that the project isn't all-or-nothing; you can roll out the solution and choose to invest more based on initial user adoption. If you choose the right solution, you get a customizable, tested product that offers on-going maintenance and support, allowing your developers to stay focused on core competencies.

The Right Solution



A growing number of businesses are using Powered by Looker to deliver data-driven insights to their users. [Powered by Looker](#) lets you skip the huge up-front investment and the diversion of time and resources away from your core business and get value from your analytics immediately. With Looker, you can implement quickly while ensuring the solution meets the full set of analytics requirements your customers are asking for.

What sets Powered by Looker apart is its delivery capabilities. Looker's modern architecture means you can expose analytics for your customers however you want. Deploy Looker as an embedded iFrame or using Javascript. Use our full RESTful API or our powerful scheduler to deliver reports by email or webhook. You can even deploy a fully OEMed solution.

Plus, Looker doesn't force you to move all your data to a new cloud environment or adopt new GUI-based functionality for modeling and logic. It sits directly on top of your database with a JDBC connection, and delivers data straight to whatever location is needed. Use Looker's agile modeling layer to define your data and control who can access it. Looker ensures your data means the same thing, no matter how it's accessed. The version-controlled modeling layer also ensures your business logic stays flexible. Iterate on your data product as your customers' needs change, or roll back updates you're not happy with.

In the following sections, we explore how three companies, **ISCS**, **Urban Airship**, and **Campus Logic**, are using Powered by Looker to put analytics into the hands of their customers.

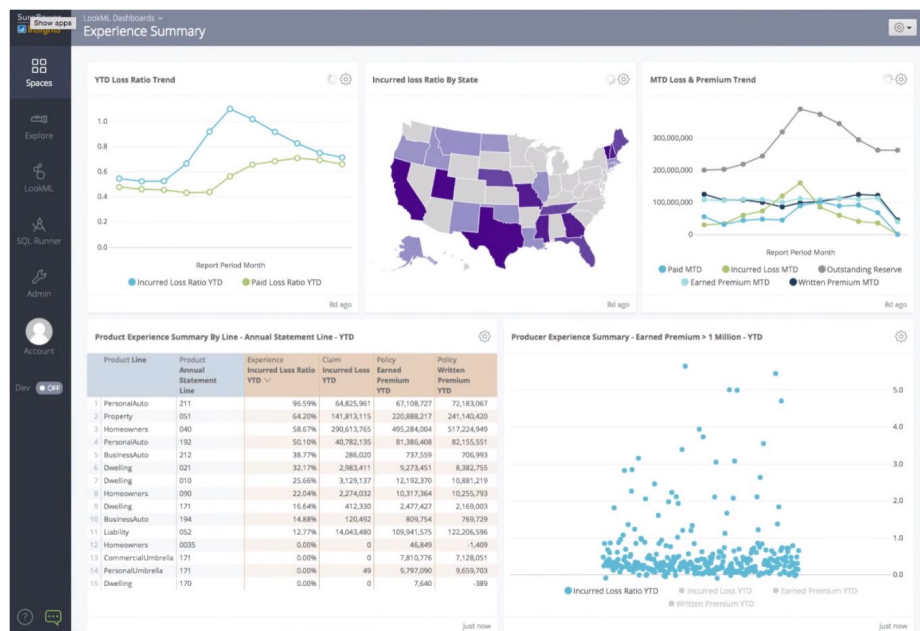


Built on AWS as well as Looker, SurePower Insights™ easily supports the largest datasets belonging to any ISCS customer. And thanks to Looker’s flexibility, ISCS can easily structure access to data based on role or other considerations.

ISCS: SurePower Insights for P&C Insurers

ISCS provides software and services for the property and casualty (P&C) insurance industry. Their SurePower Innovation® cloud-based enterprise suite serves as a platform for all of a P&C organization’s insurance processing needs. The platform includes modules for policy administration, underwriting, claims, and billing as well as specialty modules for mobile and reinsurance.

ISCS wanted to find a way to improve the analytics options available to their customers. Specifically, they knew that users needed to be able to customize the pre-written reports available to them and make the output more relevant to their business needs. In addition to modifying existing reports, they wanted to provide a way for customers to build their own reports. Finally, they needed an environment that could manage the very large data sets that some of their customers rely on and be able to provide tiered access to analytics depending on role.



“We wanted Insights to enable a conversation with our customers and their data.”

Barry Ralston
AVP of Business Intelligence,
ISCS

Leveraging Powered by Looker, ISCS deployed SurePower Insights™, a new BI platform that includes comprehensive analytics to provide customers better insights into their data. Looker’s flexible approach to data modeling enables SurePower Insights™ to provide users access to all of their data, including extensions, log and usage information as well as other data that would not typically be part of a standard BI solution. Since Looker integrates with existing permissioning systems, ISCS can be sure that users are only seeing the data they should see, as insurance regulations require. The platform also features the ability to push information to users. For example, a claims person may want to know any time there is a loss over a certain amount. SurePower Insights™ enables users to set custom thresholds and generate reports automatically any time they are met.





Campus Logic: Streamlining Financial Aid with CampusMetrics

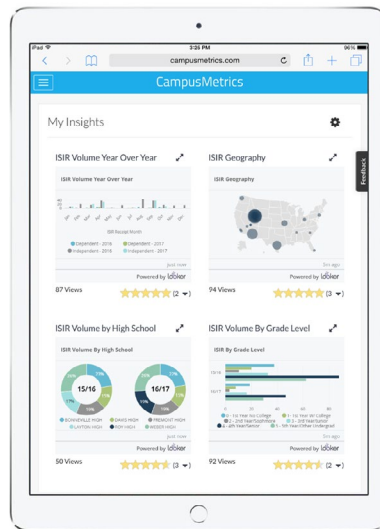
CampusLogic offers a cloud-based service that simplifies the financial aid process for more than 80 colleges and universities and 300,000 students. Students use CampusLogic's personalized, mobile student engagement platform to easily navigate the complexities of financial aid qualification and application. Schools use CampusLogic's StudentForms and AwardLetter products to streamline financial aid administration, improve enrollment and student satisfaction.

CampusLogic knew that both students and schools could benefit from the insights locked within their data surrounding the financial aid application and administration processes. The right analytics environment would enable schools to better understand, and better serve, their student populations. In setting out requirements for an embedded BI tool, they decided they needed an environment that would allow for easy implementation and embedding of analytics, and that could be deployed quickly. They needed to be able to transform school data from different systems in a consistent way. And they wanted single sign-on to enable their customers to leverage existing credentials.

CampusMetrics delivers built-in dashboards and quick ad-hoc querying to provide institutions a better understanding of their student populations and to drive enrollment, make policy decisions, and adjust services to meet student needs. User organizations simply upload their ISIR (Institutional Student Information Record) data to CampusMetrics. In as little as five minutes, they have access to built-in dashboards and querying capabilities. CampusMetrics includes

a comprehensive library of pre-built dashboards covering application volume, Pell Grant distribution, and geography mapping of ISIRs.

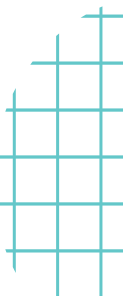
CampusLogic found that Powered by Looker's LookML interface provided exactly the modeling layer they were looking for to simplify ingesting and integrating customer data from a wide variety of schools and supporting systems. Looker's single sign-on was a perfect fit as was Looker's subscription model, which mirrored CampusLogic's own subscription model.



Using Powered by Looker, Campus Logic was able to deploy CampusMetrics, a fully functioning embedded BI environment, in about six weeks.

“There were two real reasons why we picked Looker. One was the ease of single sign-on. The other was the power of the model layer.”

Chris Chumley
Chief Operating Officer,
CampusLogic



Urban Airship: Insight for Mobile Apps

Urban Airship provides a mobile engagement platform that helps businesses easily and efficiently connect with their customers. They support more than 40,000 mobile apps worldwide. With Urban Airship, app developers and managers can implement and manage all content customers receive from the app (like push notifications and in-app messages) as well as their Wallet solution that supports digital campaigns that focus on customer loyalty, coupons, and gift cards. The platform also allows users to connect streaming mobile user data directly to any business system, supporting real-time user-centric analysis and omni-channel marketing. All in all, it's a rather robust and data-rich platform!

Urban Airship wanted to provide a feature-rich audience intelligence solution to their customers, so they began a search for the best BI to embed in their product. This environment would help their users determine why their mobile app audience was growing (or not), and allow them to create user-level engagement campaigns in minutes across mobile and non-mobile channels.

In their eyes, the only way a solution like this would work was if they created an excellent user experience. They wanted their tool, Insight, to provide analytics and reporting functionality that their customers would find accessible and engaging. Additionally, the solution needed to support customer- and vertical-specific dashboards, ROI reports, and simple ad-hoc querying to enable users to drill into the data. And from a practicality standpoint, it needed to be built on a scalable storage and query architecture. And that's exactly what they were able to do with Powered by Looker.

Insight gives Urban Airship customers the tools they need to power a multi-channel web and mobile campaign. They can identify customer segments most likely to buy, pinpoint remarketing opportunities with users who have abandoned a conversion funnel and determine why users have uninstalled their app. The reporting features enable users to measure the ROI of mobile engagement campaigns and export lists of users that are interested in a specific product or content item.



Insight relies on a full range of analytic functionality provided by Powered by Looker. And because they bought Powered by Looker, Urban Airship was able to rapidly deploy this solution without losing sight of their core messaging platform solution.

Using Powered by Looker, Urban Airship developed and deployed Urban Airship Insight, an embedded solution designed specifically to support audience analysis leveraging mobile application and related data. Insight provides the full set of customizable reports and interactive dashboards Urban Airship customers need as data visualization tools to support independent data discovery and exploration.

“As innovators in mobile marketing we knew that we needed to partner with a company that could match our rate of innovation. Looker was a clear winner because of their great user experience and easy-to-implement technology. This allowed us to focus our efforts where we add value by making it easy and actionable for a marketer to grow and retain their mobile audience.”

Neel Banerjee,
Sr. Product Manager
Urban Airship



Who's Next?

As embedded BI and analytics solutions continue to gain momentum, a growing number of businesses will be exploring how they can leverage embedded BI and analytics as a value-added offering for their customers. [Powered by Looker](#) provides these businesses an option that combines the best of the build and buy approaches to embedding. Powered by Looker enables them to put in place an analytics solution that is right for their customers, in line with their budget and their core business priorities.

Ready to Love Your Analytics?

Come see a live demo and schedule your free trial.
Call 888-960-2331 or go to:

looker.com/demo

About Looker

Looker is an inventive software company that's pioneering the next generation of business intelligence (BI). We believe in bringing better insights and data-driven decision-making to businesses of all sizes. The company has fast become the catalyst for data-driven cultures at hundreds of industry-leading companies such as Yahoo!, Gilt, Strava and Sony.

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