



Leveraging Analytics Platforms for Ad Reporting

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OVERVIEW

This whitepaper focuses on the reporting challenges faced by advertising agencies. It also analyzes the various reporting or analytics platforms that can be used to make reporting faster, simpler and more effective.

REPORTING AT AN AD AGENCY

An advertising agency offers media services to advertisers. A part of its work involves creating and/or running media campaigns across various platforms for their clients. With multiple campaigns running across various marketing platforms at any given point in time, cross-channel campaign performance reporting

becomes a big challenge for the agency without an effective reporting platform. Significant manual efforts are invested in gathering data from various sources. The data has to be cleaned and customized to make it ready for advanced analytics. Moreover, the agencies are required

to share the campaign performance numbers with their clients for performance assessment and reconciliation. The agencies track and measure their campaigns in various ways and pass on this information to the advertisers. Many ad companies still prefer the traditional method. For example, reports in the form of MS Excel spreadsheets or MS PowerPoint presentations. Other companies leverage technology in form of off-the-shelf reporting platforms such as Datorama, or build their own reporting and analytics solutions using Microsoft PowerBI or Tableau.

Both bespoke and off-the-shelf platforms have their own advantages. A bespoke platform can provide a complete customized solution that addresses all the use cases; has low operational cost; and provides complete control over data. An off-the-shelf solution, on the other hand, has a quicker time to market.

OFF-THE-SHELF BI ANALYTICS PLATFORMS

Off-the-shelf analytics platforms such as Datorama, Domo, Datapine, Looker, and Birst provide ready-to-use tools for marketers to convert data into insights. These platforms easily procure data from various distributed sources into a single platform, for a user to get the larger picture. The aforementioned platforms also help clean and transform the data to gain insights, enabling smart decision making. In the following sections, let us discuss the various capabilities that an off-the-

shelf BI analytics platform can offer:

Data Ingestion

The biggest challenge that ad agencies face is fetching data from various distributed sources for reporting. Nonetheless, the various BI analytics platforms available in the market can help solve this issue, because they support the ingestion of data from various channels such as DSPs, trade desks, social media platforms, ad networks through connectors. Most of the aforementioned platforms also enable data ingestion through FTP or email.

Data Hierarchy

To ease data representation and analysis, all the off-the-shelf BI analytics platforms have a structured hierarchy. The general hierarchy is: Dashboard > Pages > Graphs and Grids. To break down complex data into meaningful insights, a dashboard can have multiple pages and a page can have multiple graphs and grids.

Dashboards Creation

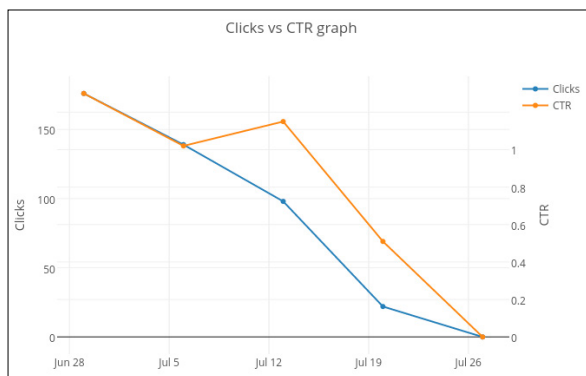
An ad agency can measure and monitor campaign performance with the help of numerous charts available within BI analytics platforms.

A few reports that ad agencies frequently use, and can be better represented as dashboards in these platforms, are as follows:

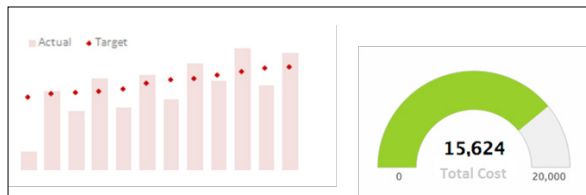
- Performance monitoring: The user can track campaign performance with the help of a dashboard that compares various metrics and KPIs over the duration of the campaign.

Some of the metrics are:

- Impressions
- Clicks, CTR (Click-throughRate)
- Cost, CPC (Cost per Click), CPM (Cost per thousand impressions)
- Activities or conversions: Click-through conversions and View-through conversions
- Revenue



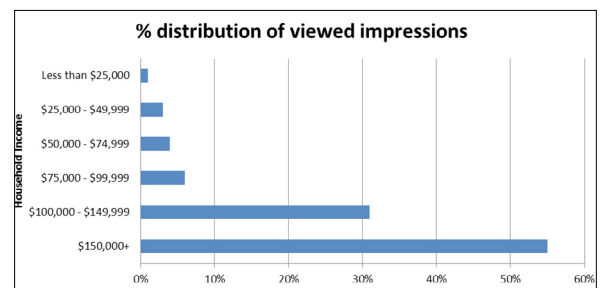
- Pacing report: This enables a campaign manager to monitor the planned vs. actual spend (and impressions or clicks) for an ongoing campaign, in order to determine whether the campaign is on track.



- Audience insights: Consider a situation in which a campaign gets a good number of impressions, which do not translate into sales. Here, it is important to know whether the campaign reached the right audience. This data can be sourced from the Data Management Platform (DMP) being used by the advertiser, and visualized on a dashboard. For

example, a brand like Gucci can assess whether their campaigns are reaching high-income individuals or not.

Based on the following graph, the brand can gauge that 55% of the overall users who viewed their ads are in the \$150,000+ household income range.



Interactivity

Dashboards provide an insightful overview of the entire system in an easy-to-read format. But, to get to the 'How' and 'Why' behind the data, a user requires details. The user can look at the data from a different perspective with the help of filters. Most BI analytics platforms provide interactive filters, enabling users to view data at a high level or at any level of granularity.

Reporting Templates

Availability of templates makes reporting easier and faster because reports or dashboards need not be created for every new campaign. Some BI analytics platforms provide reusable, customized templates. Some other platforms have predefined templates to serve a particular purpose.

Goal Monitoring

Most of the aforementioned platforms enable the setting up of KPI goals and related alerts for effective goal monitoring. For example, a campaign manager can set up an alert for daily spend that exceeds the budget amount, or a CPM that exceeds a targeted maximum CPM on a particular day.

Custom Scheduled Reports

All the aforementioned platforms enable agencies or advertisers to set up customized reports that can be delivered to them periodically through email.

Collaboration

Most of the aforementioned platforms enable users to collaborate by leveraging the dashboards. This feature facilitates fast and more informed decision making. These platforms use tools such as Slack, through which analysts, marketing executives, and CXOs can share and discuss insights, ask questions, and strategize within the platform.

Data Analysis

- **Advanced analysis:** To derive insights from the data ingested, advertisers or agencies might want to run statistical modelling techniques. Most of the BI analytics tools enable advanced analytical modelling such as predictive modelling to forecast future numbers.
- The aforementioned platforms

enable merging of data from multiple data sets for a dashboard that provides a holistic view of data.

Data Transformation Rules

- Data transformation is a process by which you select source data through some SQL or application method, convert that data, and map it to the format that is required by the target system.
- The transformation rules describe the current state of the information and what needs to be done to it to produce a particular result.
- The result of a transformation must be a value whose type fits the type of the target object.

A transformation can include the following items:

- Converting from one data type to another, resolving inconsistencies that might exist between the source and target data
- Converting currencies for monetary calculations
- Reducing redundant or duplicate data

Now, let us take a look at the features of two off-the-shelf BI analytics platforms—Datorama and Domo. The following table presents a comparison data of the two platforms.

Feature	Datorama	Domo
Data Ingestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectors for ingesting data from various sources such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google DCM • FTP • Email • Creation of custom connectors using APIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectors for ingesting data from various sources such as Facebook, Google DBM, and Google Analytics • FTP or SFTP • Creation of custom connectors using APIs
Data Hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data can be structured as: Workspace (Brand) > Dashboard > Page • A workspace can have multiple dashboards and a dashboard can have multiple pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data can be structured as: Dashboard > Cards • A Card is a single visualization that can be a part of a dashboard • The Collections feature is a set of Cards. This feature may have a logical or functional connection. For example, Collections for each department or brand
Creating Dashboards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User can create a dashboard using the data ingested into the platform. • Dashboard can contain multiple pages that contain various widgets such as, bar or bubble or pie charts, rich text, image, and so on to display campaign performance. • Datorama does not suggest chart type 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User can create Cards by selecting a data set and the corresponding visualization that can be grouped together to tell a story. • Domo suggests chart types depending on the data the user wants to visualize. • User can share Cards with other users.
Filters and drill-downs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports interactive and cascading filters on dashboards • Supports drill-down feature for some charts (for related Dimensions only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Card-level filters that can be used to filter data being displayed on the chart. It does not support dashboard-level or Interactive filters for end users with a view-only access • Allows creation of filters for any chart type and enables drilling down to multiple levels
Reporting Templates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports creation and saving of a dashboard as a template, so that it can be replicated across brands or campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports a certain pre-defined template called Apps that are designed to answer typical questions. Users can also create apps and save them for future use

Feature	Datorama	Domo
Goal Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows setting up of KPI goals and related alerts through email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows setting up of KPI goals and related alerts through email
Custom Scheduled Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows scheduling of custom reports that can be delivered through email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows scheduling of custom reports that can be delivered through email
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports Slack for collaboration on Dashboards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports Domobuzz for collaboration on Cards & Pages
Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports statistical modeling, predictive analytics, audience segmentation and attribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports predictive analytics
Access to Shared Dashboards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Users can play with data, change the report date range, filter dimensions, and so on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Users only have access to the view shared with them. They cannot change filters or modify the date range.
Sharing or Exporting Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports these formats: PNG, Excel, PDF, PowerPoint, CSV, TSV, TXT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports these formats: PowerPoint, Excel, and CSV. User can also take a print-out of the dashboard screen or get it on email.
Branding or White Labeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Users can design a dashboard to reflect the brand by including images, logos, & brand colors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Users cannot add images on the dashboards
Mobile-friendly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, through browser 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, it has a mobile app

CONCLUSION

Off-the-shelf analytics platforms such as Datorama and Domo provide a great way for advertisers to consolidate all their data in one place and make better decisions. Agencies can leverage these platforms for fetching data, running business rules, visualizing trends, and sharing insights—all at a single location.

Out of the two platforms discussed here, Datorama is more focused towards marketing analytics across industries, and is more suited for advertising and marketing agencies. Domo, on the other hand, is a generic tool that can be used across industries and functions.



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