

CASE STUDY

Optimization of Clients' Sales and Marketing Campaigns

How Modern Marketing Concepts uses RapidMiner to serve their customers and optimize their sales and marketing

Customer

Modern Marketing Concepts

Location

USA

Industry

Marketing

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-Brian Tvenstrup
Chief Analytics Officer, Modern Marketing Concepts

The Customer

Modern Marketing Concepts, Inc. (MMC) is a global leader in the business-to-business marketing services industry, offering innovative marketing solutions across multiple industries, including the building trades and healthcare. Based in Binghamton, NY, MMC has over 25 years of experience changing the way its clients market and sell their products, with turnkey, full-service marketing applications and services that fine tune campaigns to optimize results.

The Solution

Tvenstrup regularly reviews newer platforms and open source solutions, and in 2010, he discovered RapidMiner on an analytics industry news website. Initially, he used the client software on his own and then began using it alongside the existing applications for predictive analytics, text mining, and data mining. "From the start, there was a high level of satisfaction with RapidMiner because of its ease-of-use, low learning curve, low cost, solid community support, wide functionality, and ability to

The Situation

Brian Tvenstrup, Chief Analytics Officer at MMC, explains one way the company helps its Fortune 1000 and mid-market clients is with predictive analytics technology, "For many years, MMC used predictive analytics applications, primarily from two legacy vendors, to create predictive models that segment clients' existing and potential customers, and identify how and when to roll out sales and marketing campaigns. The results were good, but the legacy systems were high-priced, hard-to-use, and never quite satisfactory," he said.

work with large and unstructured data sets," he said. Within two years, Tvenstrup and his team of four analysts committed to RapidMiner as MMC's primary platform for predictive analytics and added RapidMiner Server to automate analytical processes and enable secure access to self-service reporting dashboards in clients' web browsers.

The First Projects

“Our first RapidMiner project was to use a client’s historical sales data from a relational database and an ERP system, to create customer targeting and segmentation models. We segmented existing customers and predicted the best ways the client could market to them. Because of RapidMiner’s ease-of-use, especially the drag and drop modeling interface, within days our team was using it productively. The visual flow allowed my team to design processes step by step, and easily modify them,” said Tvenstrup.

Another project aimed to predict how to optimize cross sales (selling related products to existing customers), for a medical supply company. By creating a cross sell model in RapidMiner, MMC helped the company use historical sales data to identify which other products would be most likely to be purchased by specific healthcare providers, increasing sales overall and decreasing efforts to sell products that were not likely to be purchased.

RapidMiner Server, the Collaboration Solution

Because Tvenstrup and some of his team work outside MMC’s headquarters, and their clients are all over the world, RapidMiner Server is particularly useful. “RapidMiner Server opens up more opportunities to collaborate internally as a team, and externally with clients. We can enable secure, remote access; and share, schedule and automate predictive analytics and text mining processes. Our clients particularly like having customized dashboards and reporting from many data sources on their desktops.”

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The Environment

MMC is primarily a Windows computing environment, running RapidMiner on what Tvenstrup describes as “laptops or desktops with modest processing power,” and running RapidMiner Server on a commercial virtual server service, typically accessing customer data stored into MMC’s Microsoft SQL Server databases. Plans are underway to access more and more data from the web, including unstructured clickstream data, data automatically scraped from websites, and data about abandoned shopping carts on e-commerce sites. This will help clients identify issues with their online sales processes and e-commerce designs, predict what improvements will be most successful, apply them, and maintain and increase online sales.

In the Future

Tvenstrup is also planning on broader use of the R programming language for statistics and data mining. “We want to replace statistical functionality from one of our legacy statistical applications with R by creating customized programs and then using those with RapidMiner’s R call procedures. This will allow us to take advantage of more statistical functionality in RapidMiner,” he said.

The Results

Altogether, Tvenstrup credits RapidMiner with helping MMC better support its clients by improving its turnkey marketing services, which include hosted CRM databases, direct mail, print services, and in-house telesales and lead management (staffed with over 200 full time employees at MMC). “RapidMiner deserves to be better known and more widely used for predictive analytics and text mining. It’s easier to use than other products, and the company support staff is very knowledgeable, helping us with troubleshooting, and designing processes to fix any problems we might have.”