



Deepening Audience Understanding For Nationwide Public Broadcasting

SUMMARY

PBS is the most prominent provider of public educational television programming in the U.S., servicing over 350 member stations. With over 800 million annual page views to PBS.org, PBS had working assumptions about visitor behavior — but needed more to help them take action. They looked to us to help deepen their understanding of their online audience segments.

We leveraged big data in the Google Cloud Platform to mine insights across the PBS ecosystem, using these insights to identify new segments, develop in-depth personas per segment, and inform content development. We empowered the network with the data they needed to fine-tune their site so that they could better meet their audiences' needs.

SERVICES

Enterprise Analytics

Analytics Implementation

Data Science

PARTNERS

Google

CHALLENGE

PBS.org serves as an online content hub, supporting the television experience with local schedules, new program information, clips and full episodes, and more. To inform site design and content structure, PBS needed to uncover specific visitor behaviors beyond metrics available through Google Analytics 360.

But the sheer size of the PBS dataset was overwhelming, with over 330 million sessions, 800 million pageviews, and 17.5 million episode plays per year. In addition, average page views and other descriptive statistics only summarized the big picture; PBS needed a solution that tested their hypotheses and provided a deeper knowledge of key segments and behavior.



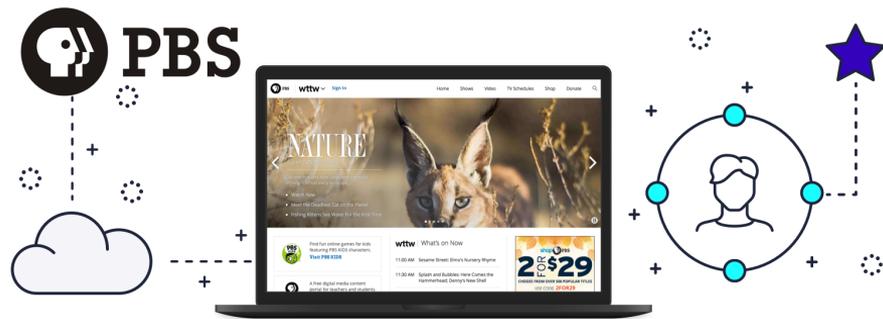


SOLUTION

Using Google Cloud Platform to draw on data science techniques, we helped PBS identify user patterns that would have been impossible to detect from averages alone. This detailed process involved exporting Google Analytics 360 data into BigQuery to streamline the dataset, making it manageable for analysis. Then, Google Cloud Platform was used to connect user trends and ultimately yield seven distinct user groupings based on similarities in digital behavior. Machine learning validated and expanded upon the contextual-based theories PBS had formed about its audiences.

RESULTS

With qualified audience segments defined, PBS can now make better-informed decisions about which features and content to prioritize on their website. They are also well-positioned for future targeting and content strategy; by continuing to explore data mining, PBS has the ability to personalize content by audience, tailor promoted content in sites and apps, and inform email updates and push notifications across the entire PBS ecosystem.



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“We believe segments exist based on a variety of data sources, our contextual knowledge of the site, and of PBS viewers and members. But this is the first time we’ve been able to use data mining across the totality of our web data to see what it can tell us about our audiences.”

Amy Sample

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