

Shazam Uses Real-Time Insight to Drive Improved User Engagement and Revenue



Executive summary

Shazam is one of the world's most popular apps that connects people to the world around them. With a simple tap of a button, Shazam delivers a deep content experience in seconds, including lyrics and videos as well as purchasing, sharing and more. To gain valuable insight into customer behavior, Shazam needed a real-time solution that could handle big data volume, variety and scale. Since deploying Splunk Enterprise, the company has seen benefits including:

- Increased user engagement
- Real-time business insights
- Deeper understanding of campaign effectiveness

Why Splunk

Shazam's business is built on driving user engagement with its music and media recognition app. When users "shazam" songs or television content, they create machine data. This data contains significant insights, including critical information needed by the product team, salespeople and executives at Shazam, ultimately affecting product and business decisions.

Even though a goldmine of information on customer behavior existed within multiple terabytes of data generated by the Shazam app, the company's engineering team faced a significant challenge extracting these insights. Prior to Splunk, they relied on solutions that loaded data in batch intervals and provided no ad hoc analysis capability, with processing times ranging from hours to several days. Additionally, any changes required costly engineering resources.

Shazam runs two Splunk instances. The first is used for sales analytics, to support "Shazam for TV" advertising campaigns. The second monitors the app itself and how it is performing in relation to Shazam's key business metrics. Shazam also segregates the data to protect customer privacy. Role-based access rules ensure that sensitive information—for example, geo-tagging data—is protected.

Industry

- Media and entertainment
- Other (mobile services)

Splunk Use Cases

- Business analytics

Challenges

- Difficulties extracting insight from a goldmine of information on customer behavior
- No ad hoc analysis capabilities to query data
- Lengthy data processing times, anything from several hours to several days
- Inability to react quickly to data processing and query requirements

Business Impact

- Real-time insight into product updates maximizes user engagement
- Overall improvements in key metrics: monthly active users, time spent on the app, revenue
- More informed product decisions thanks to deeper understanding of user behavior and trends
- Improved understanding of Shazam for TV campaign effectiveness
- Added value for advertising partners
- Critical real-time business insights and reduced overhead

Data Sources

- Mobile application data

Splunk Products

- Splunk Enterprise

Real-time analytics enable speed of innovation

Using Splunk Enterprise has reduced the overhead and IT complexity of Shazam's business analytics initiatives. The company can now ingest data of almost any structure, run ad hoc queries without engineering support, automate visualizations and reduce time-to-results from hours to minutes. With Splunk software, Shazam can deliver insights to the business without involving teams of developers to update custom applications or database schemas. Shazam is now able to change metrics or add new dashboards quickly and easily, and provide the latest results to partners and internal stakeholders in real time.

Shazam has a rapid iteration model, with a new version of the app released every two to four weeks. Each update is designed to drive incremental improvements in the experience, aimed at increasing customer engagement and enjoyment. The product and engineering teams rely on Splunk software to monitor the impact of every change—during test stages and once a release is in production.

Providing value-add for advertising services

Shazam for TV enables brands to extend the reach of advertising campaigns by offering additional content to viewers when they “shazam” ads during their favorite programs. With Splunk Enterprise, the Shazam team has created a business analytics dashboard that provides salespeople with user trends around these campaigns in real time, to better understand campaign effectiveness in the field as they are executed. The company also packages up these insights for Shazam's advertising partners, providing analytics dashboards with statistics such as aggregate counts of product information requests, the geographic location of tags, and device or platform OS.

“Splunk enables us to analyze all of our mobile app data without having to do batch processing or any other cost and time-intensive steps required of traditional business intelligence. Now we can change metrics or add new dashboards quickly and easily, and provide the latest results to our partners and internal stakeholders in real time. That just wasn't possible before.”

Charles Henrich, EVP Engineering
Shazam

Deeper understanding of user behavior

Splunk Enterprise is a valuable resource for the majority of Shazam's staff, including product managers, engineers and the sales organization. Insights from Splunk software, combined with regular focus group user feedback, help validate company product findings, or highlight areas for improvement within the app. For example, when members of a recent focus group weren't aware of a new feature in the app, a search in Splunk Enterprise revealed engagement was below predicted levels. Shazam was then able to educate users on that feature and increase engagement with the app.

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