Creating analytics that scale

Based on content presented by Jon Sadow,
Co-founder and Chief Product Officer at Scoop

Be deliberate about your analytics strategy

As you grow, you need your analytics capabilities to scale with you. If they don't, analytics could prevent your product from growing—because as you get bigger, you won't have the data you need to make the right decisions.

One of the biggest obstacles to scaling is the volume of data that you end up tracking. You simply can't track everything, because doing so creates too much operational overhead. You end up spending too much time simply managing what data you're taking in.

Instead, you have to be deliberate about your analytics strategy. What data are you collecting, and why? This is especially important before you launch a new feature.

Remember, product growth is a cycle that starts and ends with product prioritization. You need to prioritize the product features that you want to develop, develop those features, get data from them once they're built, and use that data to prioritize the next round of product developments. But for that cycle to happen, you need to be deliberate about your analytics.

Three product analytics takeaways

Jon and his team at Scoop have spent a lot of time making analytics mistakes throughout their growth. Here's what they've learned from those mistakes:

1. PRODUCT ANALYTICS MUST BE A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS.

If everyone understands why you're collecting the data that you've decided to collect, you'll have an easier time meeting your goals.

Engineering will have context behind why they're building product features in specific ways. Design will be able to design features in a way that will help your data make sense. Data science will be able to help the product team find more growth opportunities. Cross-functional buy-in is a must for analytics.

2. MAKE SURE ANALYTICS ARE EASY TO IMPLEMENT FOR YOUR ENGINEERING TEAM.

The engineering team will be the ones who are putting your event actions into place. Convoluted event management will make their job more difficult.

To get around this, use a tracking plan with clear naming conventions. That will help streamline your entire process.

> " In all of the things we've worked on, analytics is one of the top two most difficult things we've scaled. "
>
> - Jon Sadow

3. INVEST IN PRODUCT ANALYTICS EARLY.

You need to have the right tools and processes in place before you scale. Here's what Jon's team uses:

1. GitHub as an analytics repository. The analytics repository helps Scoop's team have historical context on why they are collecting specific data points. It also puts the analytics events into a format that's easy to implement for the engineers.

2. Zeplin to help with hand-offs. This is crucial for cross-functional collaboration. This tool helps everyone on the team understand the context behind new product features and improvements.

3. Protocols from Segment for data governance and debugging. Data governance is important for understanding whether your analytics events are correct prior to a full-scale roll out to your entire user base.

4. Redshift for a data warehouse. This is where Scoop stores all of their data.

5. Periscope Data is the business intelligence tool that Scoop uses to help understand their data.

If you start using these tools before you scale, you'll have a strong foundation for analytics. That way, when you do grow, you'll be prepared to handle complex data that happens as a result of growth.

How Segment can help

Segment's customer data infrastructure is built to handle analytics as companies scale. That's one of the reasons Scoop uses Segment. In the third takeaway above, we mentioned some of the tools you'll need, but check out our full integrations catalog for these three tools:

1. An analytics tool that will help you track how people use your product

2. A business intelligence tool that can help you draw insights out of your data

3. A data warehouse that will give you a place to easily store your data for future analysis

Many companies find that they need more than one analytics tool to get the most out of their data. We recommend testing a few and finding the ones that work best for you.

Keep reading to learn more

- **How to Create a Tracking Plan**

- **How VWO Used Product Analytics to Increase New Feature Adoption and Reduce Churn**

- **Selecting the Right Analytics Tool for Your Business**

- **Segment's Analytics Academy**