SendGrid Delivers Better Customer and Employee Experiences Using Informatica's Cloud Data Management Solution for AWS

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- Ken Apple, VP of Support and Business Operations, SendGrid

Remember the not-so-far-off days of sifting through your email junk folder trying to find receipts from online vendors, or missing important product announcements because a marketing email went straight to spam?

This scenario doesn't happen as often these days, and that's partially because of companies such as SendGrid. Born from the frustration of three engineers whose application emails often didn't get delivered, SendGrid offers an innovative, cloud-based platform for reliable email delivery. Many top brands, including Uber, Airbnb, Spotify, Foursquare, Booking.com, and NextDoor, depend on SendGrid to make sure their transactional and marketing emails connect with customers.

SendGrid has historically sent over 30 billion emails a month on behalf of more than 50,000 paying customers. It needs rich intelligence on each of those emails to provide its customers with detailed statistics and reports— for example, letting them know if, upon delivery, a recipient opened the message, forwarded the message,

clicked through on the calls to action, or clicked the "spam" button. As SendGrid's business continues to grow, it must scale quickly and continually enhance its analytics to improve decision-making and empower employees to deliver the best possible customer experiences.

Amy Anthony, Director, Enterprise Data Operations at SendGrid, leads a small team that is responsible for the strategic direction, design, delivery, and availability of business data for measuring performance and business outcomes. "We needed to support SendGrid's continued growth while remaining nimble, self-sufficient, and cost effective with a resource-constrained staff and no dedicated DBA on our team," she says.

Evolving to cloud data management

SendGrid's legacy MySQL-based data warehouse solution had reached capacity and could not provide the agility the company needed to support

SendGrid

Business Needs:
- Improve business decision-making and become truly data-driven with modern analytics
- Empower business users to find and use the data they need to provide the best customer experiences

Data Challenges:
- Replace legacy data warehouse, no longer meeting needs, to support growing and evolving business data needs
- Quickly integrate into new cloud data warehouse data from multiple sources in cloud and on-premises

Solution:
- Paired Informatica with Amazon Redshift and Looker for Cloud Analytics and a data warehouse architecture

Benefits:
- Enables agile, cost-effective business intelligence on a large scale
- Allows a small team to deliver accurate and reliable analytics
- Gives sales and executives easy access to customer information
- Empowers non-technical business users with self-service data access

Inside the Solution:
- Informatica Cloud Connectors for Amazon Redshift, Hadoop, JIRA, Marketo, Salesforce, Zendesk, and Zuora
- Informatica Cloud Data Integration
- Informatica PowerCenter

growth and changing business demands. Anthony's team was tasked to build a new data warehouse that could meet the needs of both business and technical users with reporting and dashboards, self-service analytics, and data mining and benchmarking. It needed to also provide a test-and-learn environment for the SendGrid marketing department.

SendGrid relies on cloud solutions such as Salesforce and Marketo to run its business. To make the new data warehouse effective, SendGrid needed to quickly and reliably integrate data from these cloud sources as well as on-premises databases.

"We needed a proven data integration solution with prebuilt connectors to rapidly integrate systems like Salesforce and Marketo," says Anthony.

An agile, scalable, cost-effective solution

SendGrid chose a data integration solution from Informatica, incorporating Informatica Cloud and PowerCenter, to support cloud data warehousing with Amazon Redshift. This solution enables SendGrid to integrate SaaS endpoints like Salesforce and Zuora into Amazon Redshift, enable self-service for "citizen integrators" with simple data integrations, develop and execute ETL mappings for Amazon Redshift, and migrate data to AWS. Users then build dashboards and queries using Looker, a business intelligence analysis platform.

"Informatica gives us a mature, compliant ETL tool and robust cloud connector functionality for loading data into Amazon Redshift," says Anthony. "Informatica provides great integration options for AWS, Salesforce, and other popular cloud services, which was critical to our success."

SendGrid brought in Datasource Consulting to evaluate the overall architecture and suggest changes and improvements, so that the design met industry-standard best practices for data warehousing. "It was very easy to get started with Informatica Cloud Data Integration because it's all web-based," says Anthony. "We can scale as needed in the cloud, keeping costs down, and offer non-technical data integration tools that business users can use."

Better data for better customer experiences

With the new cloud data warehouse in place, SendGrid executives now have trustworthy dashboards that help them gain critical insights to drive the company's continued success. "Our weekly operations meetings are much more productive because we're looking at the dashboards and having more targeted, fact-based conversations," says Ken Apple, VP of Support and Business Operations at SendGrid. "Business leaders are excited about the new analytics capabilities we're enabling with Informatica and AWS. What used to be a dream is now reality."

Sales and service employees have easy access to up-to-date customer information, enabling them to deliver high-quality customer experiences. Customers benefit from faster, more targeted solution delivery.

"The natural evolution of the foundation we've built with a view of customer, product, revenue, and email volume and usage data will allow us to roll out self-service analytics later this year," says Anthony. "Currently we've enabled power users to do more complex transformations and create their own analytics and graphs using Looker. We are confident that with this approach, we

have set ourselves up for success in a nimble, scalable, cost-effective manner to rapidly enable business insights."

Adds Ken Apple: "By using Informatica and Amazon Redshift to make data more available and accessible, we've improved employee engagement and customer satisfaction. We gained an average of 20 points per respondent on our latest employee survey, which is the largest jump we've ever seen. They're thanking us for giving them tools and data that help them do their jobs better."

Empowering non-technical users

In the near future, SendGrid will use Informatica to support additional self-service integration scenarios by "citizen integrators" such as business analysts and end users of cloud services. Analysts can conduct data mining and discovery visualizations.

"Informatica and AWS enable us to unlock our data to power business success," says Anthony. "We're already seeing lots of opportunities to use Informatica beyond the data warehouse, for other data integration needs across SendGrid."

About SendGrid

Founded in 2009, SendGrid developed an industry-disrupting, cloud-based email service to solve the challenges of reliably delivering emails on behalf of growing companies. Today, SendGrid is responsible for sending billions of emails for some of the best and brightest companies in the world.

Informatica

Digital transformation is changing our world. As the leader in enterprise cloud data management, we're prepared to help you intelligently lead the way. To provide you with the foresight to become more agile, realize new growth opportunities or even invent new things. We invite you to explore all that Informatica has to offer— and unleash the power of data to drive your next intelligent disruption. Not just once, but again and again.

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