

Case Study

Servian puts data on display for JCDecaux





Making sense of the data

As a premier player in the Australian outdoor advertising market, JCDecaux provides a range of solutions that help advertisers reach millions of people every day.

However, in recent years advertisers have shown a greater desire to understand the effectiveness of their spending and to know more about the audiences their messages are reaching. This has led them to demand a higher level of accountability from advertising solution partners.

For providers such as JCDecaux, these changing expectations have created the need to become more sophisticated in terms of the audience data it provides to advertisers. It has also meant becoming more specific regarding the value of each of its assets to different clients.

With these needs in mind, three years ago JCDecaux began working with the data solutions provider, Servian, to create data driven solutions to its business challenges.

JCDecaux Chief Marketing Officer, Essie Wake, said while the company had a strong understanding of the importance of data, it lacked the capability to ingest and analyse it effectively.

“We needed a lot of very sophisticated analytics support to make sense of the data and allow us to extrapolate that into meaningful analysis,”

An initial meeting with Servian led to a project to develop a user-friendly platform that would help JCDecaux make sense of the transactional data available to it. But this was just the beginning.

“It grew and grew and grew,” Wake said. “We started to fuse that project with a number of different data sources to make it more meaningful and began doing things beyond what we originally set out to do.”

At a glance

- **Outdoor advertising company, JCDecaux, needed to help clients better understand the nature and value of the audiences that each of its assets reached.**
- **Servian worked with JCDecaux to help it integrate and analyse different data sources and create a new audience-based pricing model.**
- **The new pricing model provides greater certainty to advertisers regarding the effectiveness of their spending with JCDecaux.**
- **This project has provided the basis for a data capability within JCDecaux which will lead to further service innovations for customers.**



Pricing inventory based on value

A critical outcome for JCDecaux has been the creation of a new advertising pricing model, which draws on data from multiple sources to calculate a specific price for a set of advertising assets based on the attributes of the audiences it reaches.

Wake said the solution was developed using a highly collaborative working group – including senior decision makers from JCDecaux – which applied the latest data analytics tools in a rapid experimentation setup.

“Servian helped us to work out where the value sat in our portfolio,” Wake said. “There was a lot of strategic thinking, very in-depth workshops – days and days on end where Servian’s staff were camped out in our offices. They made themselves available while we worked through – and tested – a number of different scenarios.”

This new model created a tight coupling between pricing and effectiveness, providing a strengthened incentive for advertisers to direct their investment into the outdoor market.

“It means we can understand where the value is behind our assets and our inventory when it comes to the audience they reach,” Wake said.

“We can stop thinking about all billboards or bus shelters or street furniture being of the same value and understand audiences in relation to those individual assets. And we have extended those insights to include time-of-day trends.”

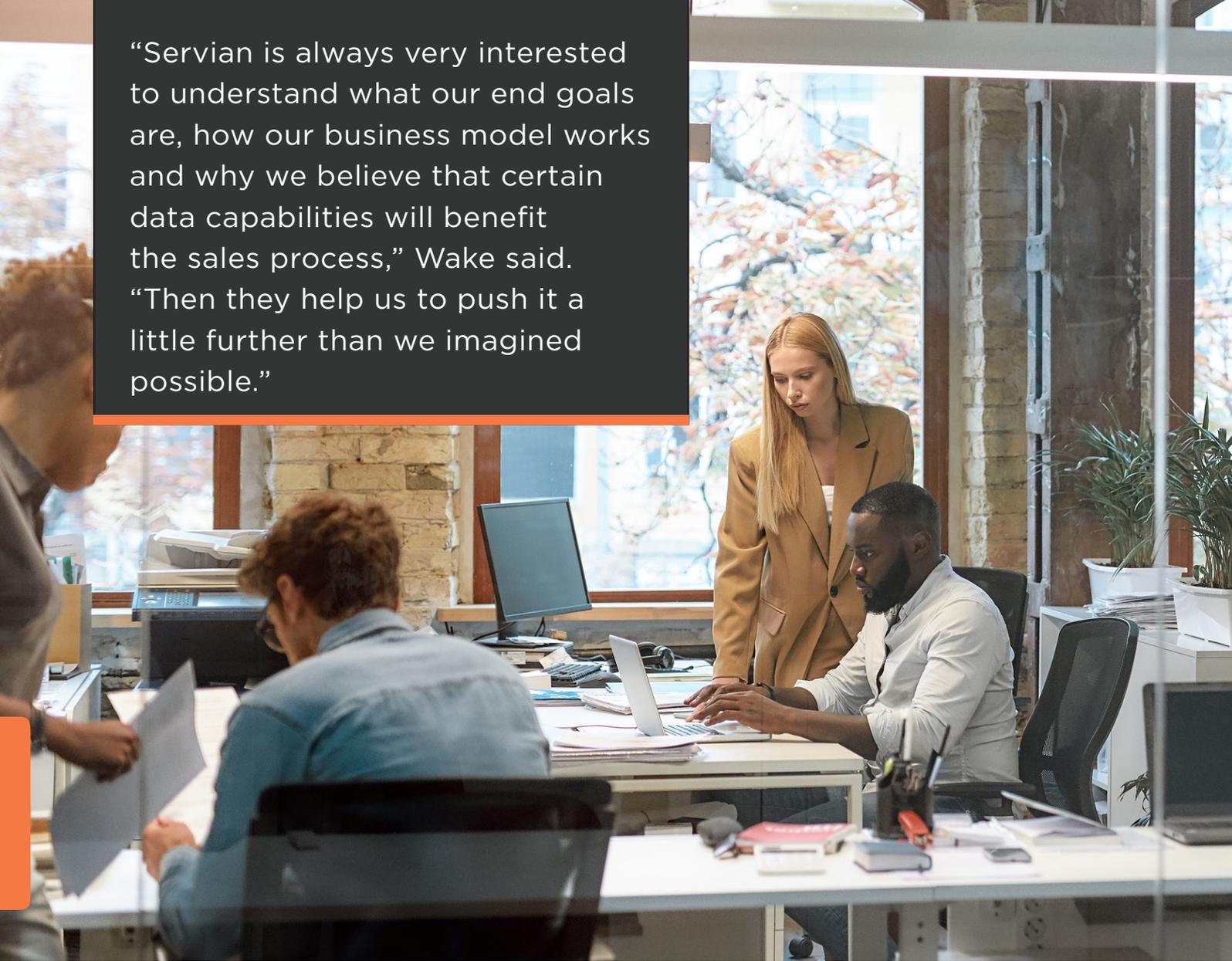
Servian adopted several advanced analytics tools to draw insight from multiple data sources, including R for modelling and analytics, and MLFlow for logging the performance of models being tested.

The pricing solution featured data visualisation tools and dashboards built with Tableau to better demonstrate patterns of activity. This enabled it to be easily understood by staff and customers, and helped both parties decide which solutions met their specific needs.

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“Servian is always very interested to understand what our end goals are, how our business model works and why we believe that certain data capabilities will benefit the sales process,” Wake said. “Then they help us to push it a little further than we imagined possible.”



A strong and continuing partnership

Servian and JCDecaux have continued to work closely together to further improve how the company uses data and digital platforms to rejuvenate and improve its sales processes.

“The advertising industry is incredibly fragmented and in the current economic climate is a lot more competitive, so data has become a price of entry,” Wake said. “It is the foundation conversation now, because our industry has become very sophisticated very quickly.”

She said the relationship with Servian had helped JCDecaux accelerate its pace of innovation and paved the way for additional sophisticated new solutions such as programmatic purchasing.

“When working with Servian, there has always been a sense that they are just as curious as we are about what the potential could be,” Wake said. “It is a real partnership. The company is always very interested to understand what our end goals are, how our business model works, and why we believe certain data capabilities will benefit the sales process. Then they help us to push it a little further than we imagined possible.

“It is an ongoing journey. We wouldn’t have gotten where we are without Servian.”

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