Informatica | Avvo

A Strong Case:

Avvo Delivers Big Data Marketing
Insights to Lawyers

*"Informatica helps us remain ahead of
the curve, giving us the tools we need to
help attorneys stay on top of their game."*
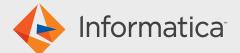
Sarbendu Mandal
Manager, Big Data Engineering
Avvo

Goals	Solution	Results
Deliver real-time ad performance and web services data to sales and marketing teams for immediate follow up	Informatica Big Data Management enables Avvo to deliver data rapidly	Increased revenue by quickly capturing and acting on additional leads
Seize opportunities to offer enhanced marketing services to existing lawyer clients and prospects	With Informatica BDM, Avvo can capture more timely insights into customer interests to drive more informed business decisions	Delivering data on an hourly, versus daily, basis to Salesforce while reducing data extraction time from 4 hours to 20 minutes
Establish a scalable, high-performance platform to support corporate growth	Informatica BDM empowers business users to self-serve, resulting in significant revenue-generating productivity gains	Improved productivity for business users and developers

Avvo was founded by a tech-savvy lawyer who saw the tremendous potential in connecting and engaging with legal consumers online. With a database of more than 10 million searchable legal questions and answers, every five seconds someone turns to Avvo for legal help—whether it's to find an attorney, obtain legal services, or download a legal form. Likewise, lawyers engage with Avvo to maintain their profiles, submit answers to legal questions posted by Avvo users, access professional development tools, and market to prospective clients.

This volume of interaction in the online legal services marketplace generates a lot of data, which was hosted in-house and stored on the Hadoop platform. To support continued growth of the Avvo knowledge base and an increasing number of member attorneys—including those who subscribe to premium services—Avvo needed a scalable big data management solution that could keep pace with its growing data volumes. The company needed a faster way to get ad performance and web services data targeting lawyers into the hands of the sales and marketing teams so that they could act on leads more quickly and efficiently. Avvo wanted to achieve this without taxing its existing data and development team, so automation and self-service capabilities were objectives from the outset.

Connecting lawyers with clients

For many lawyers, Avvo serves as an important marketing tool to help enhance visibility and reach among prospective clients. Although their basic profiles are free, attorneys can upgrade them for a fee. Avvo also offers web design services and advertising opportunities. "Although we provide legal resources for people, our sales and marketing efforts are targeted towards legal professionals," explains Sarbendu Mandal, Manager, Big Data Engineering at Avvo. "They are the heart of our business model."

Avvo relied on a traditional enterprise data warehouse (EDW) for reporting and data analytics. However, it was getting harder to support the level of scalability and performance required by the growing volumes of unstructured data. Accessing relevant data in a timely manner was also becoming increasingly difficult—yet the need to retrieve analytics in near real time was crucial.
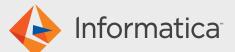
For example, Avvo's sales team uses Salesforce for customer relationship management. Data, once extracted from Hadoop, automatically populates to the auto-dialer function within Salesforce. This gives the sales team all of a prospect's interaction history, including ad clicks, login history, and other related information about the attorney. However, it could take up to a day or more for the data to be available in Salesforce. As a result, the sales team wasn't always working from the latest, most accurate records—hampering their ability to close sales.

"It's important to capture this data and capitalize on it immediately," says Mandal. "Otherwise, we risk losing the prospect."

Informatica™

From daily to hourly data

Avvo purchased Informatica Big Data Management to integrate data in two separate, high-availability environments on Hadoop, which runs in Amazon Elastic MapReduce. By standardizing on Informatica, Avvo efficiently collects data from multiple sources and feeds it to the appropriate system, triggering an automated series of events. For example, a salesperson can be alerted, in near real time, when attorneys who currently leverage the free profile are researching premium services. "With Informatica, we can capture and act on more leads faster than before," says Mandal.

This success also sets a precedent for enhanced customer satisfaction. For instance, a lawyer who answered a question posted to the forum can receive a thank you email within minutes. Likewise, attorneys who are targeted for a new service offering can be assured that they will not receive a duplicate call from a different salesperson proposing the same new service.

"With timely insights from Informatica, we drive business decisions using current, accurate, and consistent information," says Mandal.

A 20-minute recess

High-performance connectivity through native APIs enables Avvo to source and target other enterprise systems with parallel processing for high-speed data ingestion and extraction. Prior to this, data extraction could take up to four hours—and might not include the most recent data, such as a new Salesforce note added by a salesperson during the extraction period. Now, the most up-to-date data is extracted in 20 minutes.

"Informatica's Intelligent Data Platform enables us to leverage the best of open source technology for optimal execution and faster deployment," says Hemalatha Sejiane, Big Data Developer at Avvo. "We can now manage our data in a systematic, repeatable, and sustainable manner."

No special coding is required, and developers no longer rely on manual processes to ingest massive amounts of raw data, thanks to automated, pre-built adapters and parsers. This frees up their time to focus on other revenue-generating projects.

Enhanced operational agility

Lightning-fast connectivity between Informatica and Salesforce delivers immediate business insights to help Avvo reach the next level of success. Self-service data capabilities let Avvo's business users begin analyzing data to realize actionable insights faster than before. This drives overall efficiencies and productivity for the company.

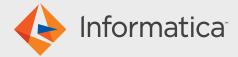"Informatica support was instrumental to our success," says Mandal. "The team was there for us night and day, and often came to the table with the answers we needed before we even asked the questions."

This proactive approach to customer service is exactly what Avvo hopes to continue providing to the legal community. By changing the rules of marketing, Avvo helps lawyers secure new clients, experience increased web site visits, and enjoy significant returns.

"We want to drive the most value for our customers," says Mandal. "Informatica helps us remain ahead of the curve, giving us the tools we need to help attorneys stay on top of their game."

Inside The Solution:

- Informatica Big Data Management