DATAInsights
Better Data-Driven Decisions

"Visual business intelligence made us a smarter organization, and enabled us to literally 'see' what we were missing."

Bill Dossett, Executive Director at Nice Ride MN

Nice Ride MN

Nice Ride Minnesota is a non-profit bike-share program for the metropolitan Twin Cities. For a fee, subscribers can rent and drop-off a bike at any one of 65 locations throughout the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.

Situation

Since its initial roll-out phase in June 2010, the program has experienced remarkable growth, and has enabled over 100,000 bicycle trips, especially in and near the downtown Minneapolis core. The program's second phase in 2011 will expand the service to even more neighborhoods in Minneapolis, St. Paul and major corridors between the two cities.

Sixty-five bicycle kiosks were distributed around Minneapolis providing subscribers convenient pick-up and drop-off points, like this kiosk at Hennepin and Laurel Avenues.

Number of Initial Rides per Terminal--Heat Map

TerminalName	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
YWCA Downtown				
Lake Street & Humboldt				
Chicago & S. 2nd Street				
100 Main Street SE				
IDS Center				
11th Street & Marquette				
North 2nd Street & 3rd Ave. N				
Lake Street & Lyndale				
Downtown Library				
11th Street & Hennepin				
Walker Art Center				
4th Street & 13th Ave. SE				
University & Bank Street SE				
Loring Park				
YWCA Uptown				
5th Street & Hennepin				
26th Street & Hennepin				
5th Street & 3rd Ave. S				
Blegen Hall				
Kolthoff Hall				
Nicollet Mall and Grant Street				
Washington & Marquette				
Hennepin & 5th Street NE				
3rd Street & 2nd Ave. S				
Washington & Cedar				
Midtown Exchange				
22nd Street & Lyndale				
Washington & 2nd Ave. N				
7th Street & 4th Ave. S				
Franklin & Colfax				
26th Street & Lyndale				

The two most popular pick-up kiosks for 24 hour subscribers were on Nicollet Mall near Orchestra Hall, and in Uptown, near Lake Calhoun. Weekends were most popular for these subscribers, many of whom were likely out-of-town visitors.

Opportunities

Nice Ride MN faced a very unique problem for a new business — rapid early adoption. Also, because it operates in a nascent sector, information management was poorly out of sync with operational strategy. As a result, data quality and consistency was generally inelastic, and regular reporting was not even considered — let alone actionable. The fundamental question of "how do you know — who, what, where and when?" wasn't being asked. Nice Ride MN was close to having their successful business run astray because its team lacked a solid process for monitoring analyzing and planning (MAP) their current and future goals.

Solution

Through its visual business intelligence process, DataInsights provided Nice Ride MN with pivotal insights into decision-making data that enabled them to see, for example, exactly how many bikes were in motion, which were the most frequented routes, and the allocation of inventory. None of this data was previously available or planned for, and compromised the firm's ability to ensure its new and vocal customers would always have a bike where and when it was needed.

"After seeing the system numbers come to life, we could tell who was using the bikes, and where and when they were going, which made all the difference in the world."

Bill Dossett, Executive Director at Nice Ride MN
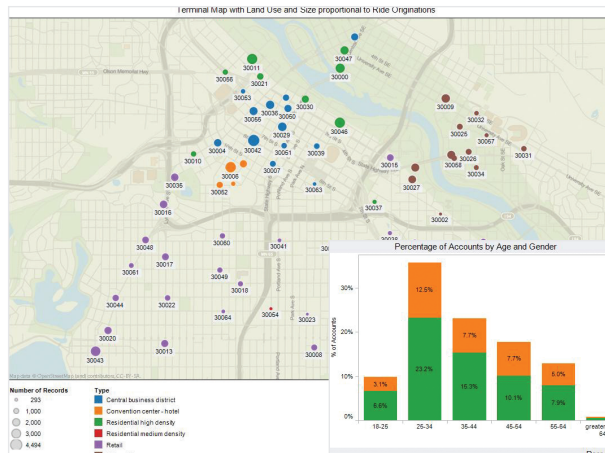
Kiosks were located in various land use areas in and near Downtown Minneapolis, the University of Minnesota, and the Uptown area.

Males aged between 25 and 34 were the greatest users of the system, while usage by people over 54 was slight.
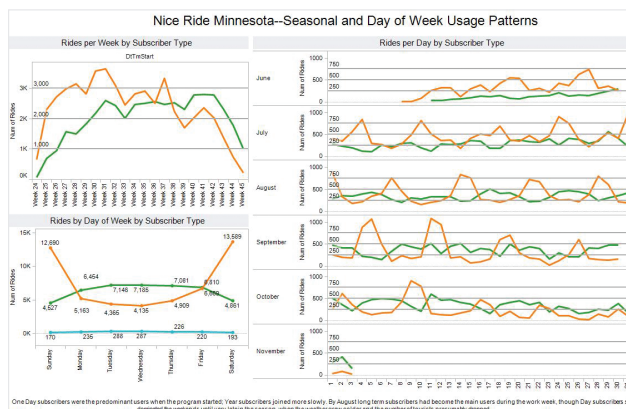
Bicycle usage by 24 hour subscribers was concentrated on weekends. Yearly subscribers displayed a flatter use curve across the week and rode more during the week, likely commuting between home and work or moving around Downtown.

By pulling the numbers out of the database and crunching them into a more actionable, viewable format, DataInsights enabled Nice Ride MN to literally project its database onto the boardroom wall. Nebulous numbers and charts were highlighted in colorful data visualizations that showed clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the firm's supply chain, and enabled the team to mine the database for customer corridors.