

Urban Science: Marketing automotive intelligence with APIs

Urban Science's Marketing Intelligence Cloud leverages the Apigee API management platform to power solutions that allow automotive marketers to create more effective and efficient marketing campaigns.

Google Cloud Results

- Provides real-time API traffic monitoring to detect and prevent platform outages
- Gives customers full-service, highly secure access to solutions for development projects
- Allows more secure onboarding of new users in as little as seven minutes

650 APIs driving more than 11.5M monthly transactions

Urban Science is a global retail consulting firm that takes a scientific approach to help companies increase market share and profitability in the most effective and efficient manner. The company supports every major global OEM and the retail automotive industry.

"We provide near real-time analytics across the automotive industry and make that data readily available to automotive marketers via the Marketing Intelligence Cloud and through our highly secure APIs."

—Luke Mercier, Global System Manager, Urban Science

Data-driven marketing

Building on its history of providing market intelligence to the automotive industry, Urban Science has been offering its [Marketing Intelligence Cloud](#) solution for several years to U.S. automotive marketers and their agencies to enable them to make more data-based decisions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their marketing efforts.

The Marketing Intelligence Cloud solution relies heavily on APIs created and managed using Google's Apigee [API Management Platform](#) to keep data flowing quickly, highly securely, and efficiently.

"We provide near real-time analytics across the automotive industry and we make that data readily available to automotive marketers via the Marketing Intelligence Cloud through our highly secure APIs," says Luke Mercier, Urban Science's Global System Manager.

Improving customer experience with APIs

The complexity of the Urban Science Marketing Intelligence Cloud offering has led to the company's full embrace of the robust features in Apigee. The company views Apigee as its full-service API management provider for access authorization, analytics, and auditing for the entire Marketing Intelligence Cloud.

Apigee dashboards run continuously on several screens, where the team monitors API use down to the minute. This data is used to monitor the Marketing Intelligence Cloud platform's growth, adoption rates by product, and adoption rates by customers. Additionally, the Apigee data is used to help scale the platform and plan for more resources, CPU memory, and storage. At the same time, team members use alerting and notification features to enable them to act on potential problems in real time, often resolving possible outages before they can affect customers.

"We've prevented several outages with Apigee alerts. We've taken action to stop an issue from becoming a systemic failure. Having real-time data at our fingertips, combined with our ability to take action quickly, is instrumental in keeping our product always on."

—Luke Mercier, Global System Manager, Urban Science

"We've prevented several outages with Apigee alerts," says Mercier. "We've taken action to stop an issue from becoming a systemic failure. Having real-time data at our fingertips, combined with our ability to take action quickly, is instrumental in keeping our product always-on."

Urban Science uses Apigee security features to help ensure that the 11.5 million monthly transactions that run through the Marketing Intelligence Cloud remain protected — and will remain so even with the platform's exponential growth. Apigee offers an API management proxy front end to the platform and is used to help secure all endpoints. There is no access point to the Urban Science Marketing Intelligence Cloud that doesn't go through the Apigee gateway.

"With 650 published APIs available to third parties as well as to internal development teams, the security provided by Apigee grants a welcome peace of mind," Mercier says.

Self-service developer portal

A core philosophy of Urban Science is to develop solutions that benefit many clients at the same time while meeting data security standards and best practices. This requires tools that are both scalable and regulated with minimal support. A key competitive factor in the choice of Apigee was the fact that the developer portal is hosted, and easy to manage. These features enabled the team to develop a solution within a highly secure and regulated environment in which users could self-register for approval and gain quick, easy, and independent access to API products. This enables Urban Science to maintain a simple client interface with the goal of providing quick access to APIs.

"We've been able to capitalize on the Apigee developer portal effectively to demonstrate and communicate our brand, documentation, and what the platform has to offer at a level that's easy to understand for users. We point all of our new customer here as a starting point."

—Joey Patterson, QA Specialist, Urban Science

"We've been able to capitalize on the Apigee developer portal effectively to demonstrate and communicate our brand, documentation, and what the platform has to offer at a level that's easy to understand for users," explains Joey Patterson, QA Specialist at Urban Science. "We point all of our new customers here as a starting point."

The system enables Urban Science clients to request data in a self-service manner while allowing the internal team to manage governance and permissions with minimal effort. At the same time, the internal team is ready to support clients who need assistance with the request process.

"One of the things that was new to Urban Science was the idea that the Marketing Intelligence Cloud as an API-based platform wasn't a finished solution," says Patterson. "It is a platform on which Urban Science can build other solutions. As a result, we can tailor the solution for the customer as well as the delivery of it. Some customers are much more advanced than others, so when it comes to navigating the request and authorization process, having that developer portal really helps bridge the gap for people who've never really interfaced with an API platform."

Measured impacts

Urban Science onboarded new customers in as little as seven minutes using Apigee. Without the Apigee platform, several steps would have been needed before API keys could be turned on, including code compilation, quality assurance validation, production deployment, and a security audit. A more traditional model would have taken two to three weeks to go through the full cycle of building to spec for each customer.

In situations where customers needed quick access to the Marketing Intelligence Cloud for urgent projects, that timeline could have resulted in lost business.

"For customers who self-serve by the development portal, write all their code, understand the API interface, and then ask for permission, we can accommodate them immediately," says Mercier. "For those types of customers, we can turn on keys and see production transaction traffic in as little as seven minutes. It's a big competitive advantage for us in winning new business."



URBAN SCIENCE

About Urban Science

Urban Science is dedicated to guiding business through science. This approach lets the company make recommendations and propose solutions based on scientifically validated results. Urban Science serves every major automotive OEM in over 100 countries through 21 global offices.

Industries: Technology

Location: United States

Google Cloud Platform

Apigee API Platform