

Accelerating time to insight with Primer

How Walmart is leveraging Primer’s advanced machine learning technology as a strategic analytic platform to amplify insight discovery for both internal and commercial impact

KEY RESULTS

1. Faster time to insight with Primer AI versus manual research and summarization processes

2. More informed decision-making leveraging more comprehensive data and unique consumer trends that wouldn’t otherwise be identified

3. A 3X increase in internal engagement with more relevant, effective Daily Insight Briefings that drive new initiatives and action



“There’s so much data available, and for a company the size of Walmart with our scale and our complexity, almost everything is relevant in some way.”

Aaron Bernstein
Senior Director of Insights and Advocacy at Walmart

CHALLENGE

Walmart is one of the world’s largest retailers and #1 in the global Fortune 500. For Walmart, staying at the forefront of technology innovation, consumer trends and behaviors is essential to maintaining a competitive edge and serving its customers with the most relevant experiences and products. Yet with the vast quantity of content and data produced every day it is difficult, if not impossible, for analysts to fully leverage this breadth of information through traditional, manual processes.

“There’s so much data available, and for a company the size of Walmart with our scale and our complexity, almost everything is relevant in some way. The challenge is actually being able to extract what are key signals and insights within all this publicly available data, and how do you translate it in a way that can be actionable and relevant,” says Aaron Bernstein, Senior Director of Insights and Advocacy at Walmart.

Analysts typically spend far too much time trying to gather and consume all the existing information, leaving far less time to actually analyze and develop strategies. Given the fast pace of modern business, Walmart needed a solution that would help analysts rapidly comprehend text from a multitude of sources and surface unique consumer insights—without having to read through a thousand news articles each day—in order to drive new initiatives, inform on current events, monitor competitors, and craft announcements.

SOLUTION

Walmart initially partnered with Primer in developing an artificial intelligence (AI) solution built on the Primer platform to help address their specific use cases. Leveraging Primer’s machine intelligence and the ability to incorporate external text-based open source data, Primer Analyze can gather and summarize content across a wide array of media outlets and identify unique trends in consumer behavior. Ultimately, Analyze provides analysts a comprehensive, unbiased perspective with a pure lens into what is happening around a given topic.

Walmart's Primer Analyze use case not only accelerates the entire process but reaches far beyond a human's capacity to identify insights that would have otherwise gone unnoticed, contributing directly to the development of strategic initiatives. "Primer helps us learn what we don't know," says Zach Aldrich, Senior Manager of Insights & Analytics at Walmart. "Analyze helps us surface unique trends and uncover things we would never even know to look for." By harnessing these unique insights, Walmart gains opportunities to adjust for particular trends, highlight certain products, or host special events to align with consumer needs and better serve its customers.

The use of Primer Analyze also aids analysts in creating the Daily Insights Brief, which summarizes industry trends and news across a range of topics and is distributed to senior leadership and relevant stakeholders throughout the organization. While people want to understand what is going on in and around the business, they don't have the time to read through an endless source of articles to gain an accurate perspective. Now, leveraging Primer's ingestion and summarization capability, the Daily Insights Brief provides associates with succinct, easily digestible synopses on topics of interest—from consumer behavior to competitor news and industry trends—compiled from an enormous pool of sources in mere minutes.

In addition, Primer offers built-in "Themes" and "Graph" capabilities that deliver even greater breadth and flexibility in the way Walmart can identify and monitor trends. "These features provide a unique perspective to show how particular topics or trends have evolved over time. This is something that was not within our reach in the past and Primer has enabled for us," says Harish Janjam, Senior Manager of Insights and Analytics at Walmart.

RESULTS

By democratizing AI, Primer enables Walmart to leverage machine intelligence technology without sophisticated data scientists, shedding light on ambiguity among enormous volumes of content and empowering its analysts to work smarter, faster, and more effectively than ever before. Not only do they achieve faster time to insight, but analysts spend considerably less time on inefficient, manual processes and more time doing what they were hired to do—developing actionable strategies—with the assistance of AI-surfaced trends and insights.

"If you've been spending manual hours researching and reading reports, to now have all that information synthesized and weighted based on significance of what's actually happening and put directly into your hands via Primer, that is pretty invaluable," says Bernstein.

Leveraging a more comprehensive set of insights and a deeper understanding of what is happening across consumer behaviors, competitors, and economic drivers, Walmart can support more informed decisions across its organization and identify ways to better serve its customers. "Our success is that we're uncovering things we wouldn't necessarily have thought of and it introduces the opportunity to explore them further," says Aldrich.

Primer Analyze also greatly improves the relevancy, effectiveness, and impact of the Daily Insights Brief, which has dramatically increased internal engagement and helped to spark discussion and potential action. The distribution list for the brief has roughly tripled in size since the deployment of Analyze and continues to grow steadily. "The fact that we're not having to push the brief onto people, but rather people desire to engage with it, is a testament to the value that it is providing on a regular basis. The summaries curated by the Analyze are trusted...and when people find out that we aren't writing it—technology is writing it—they are generally pretty blown away by that," says Aldrich.

Walmart sees incredible long-term impact for Primer Analyze across the organization, and its applicability for additional use cases in the future. "The benefits of Primer are continually evolving. It's been fascinating to see how everything has expanded over time, and we're starting conversations around adding more new features and integrations," says Aldrich.

"Analyze helps us surface unique trends and uncover things we would never even know to look for."

Zach Aldrich

Senior Manager of Insights & Analytics at Walmart

"...to now have all that information synthesized and weighted based on significance of what's actually happening and put directly into your hands via Primer, that is pretty invaluable."

Aaron Bernstein

Senior Director of Insights and Advocacy at Walmart

