Google Analytics inventor moving concept to physical stores with Euclid

November 4 2011, by Bob Yirka

Startup Euclid Dynamics' co-founder, Scott Crosby, the guy who built the technology behind Google Analytics while with Urchin Corp, (since purchased by Google) has been hard at work moving the concept to real world business stores. He and his company have announced Euclid Analytics, a physical sensor box and cloud based analysis tool that customers can use to discern customer traffic patterns in their real-world stores.

Like Google Analytics, which records and analyzes web traffic for customers, Euclid Analytics records the movement of customers; but instead of reading IP addresses, a little sensor box installed in a closet listens for Smartphone WiFi signals that are emitted from people's cell phones and then sends that information to its cloud app for analysis.

Euclid CEO Will Smith is quick to point out that no personal information is recorded or analyzed, just relevant data such as the device name. What this means is that the sensor is able to recognize the device if it appears in the store again, thus, its owner could be construed as a repeat customer. The sensor is sensitive enough that it can count customers (who have Smartphones) passing by the front of the store, the number who stop to look at a display out front, and the number who then walk through the front door. It can also keep track of what parts of the store individual customers visit, etc. The analytic part can then crunch the data to provide trends, such as the percentages that describe the number of customers who after looking at a particular display, purchase the product shown. To read the reports, the store owner would run a

dashboard app.

The sensor works by intercepting the signal sent by a Smartphone as it pings looking for a WiFi signal. From that it can figure out the unique MAC address of the phone, which it then converts to a device name to allow the system to keep track of repeat customers. For those worried about privacy issues, the store would post signs letting customers know that the system is in place and would provide an option for them to opt out if they wish. Also, customers could simply disable their Smartphone if they prefer.

While the system looks like a useful tool for store owners, it's difficult to tell just how much so since the system can't tell the store owner what percentage of customers have Smartphones. Thus, it would be tracking an unknown segment of its customer base.

The service costs $200 per month and is available now for those customers that are interested.

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