



CASE STUDY

A Global Web Services Company Uses Anura to Eliminate Affiliate Fraud and Increase Agility

Saved
\$2 million
per month

Managed
750+
Affiliates

INTRODUCTION

Companies of all sizes are affected by ad fraud, which is the practice of generating false interactions with a web asset—e.g., viewing, clicking, or converting—with the sole purpose of taking money away from legitimate businesses and putting it in the pockets of fraudsters .

Ad fraud is a major problem for too many businesses. By some estimates, one out of every four ad clicks are fraudulent. In addition to taking a big slice out of your bottom line, ad fraud waters down the return on investment (ROI) on advertising campaigns, typically requires a lot of time and energy to combat, and can even damage your brand's reputation.

COMPANY OVERVIEW

A major web services company that serves media content globally across hundreds of sites and sells subscriptions to digital books, video, and music services recently found itself dealing with an affiliate fraud problem.

The organization, which runs these services on the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Flow Framework, was targeted by fraudsters and needed to figure out an easy way to prevent those attacks in order to increase profitability and remain in good standing with AWS.

“Anura was able to identify the affiliates who were not the best affiliates. We were able to start pruning our affiliate lists because of what we found in Anura.”

CHALLENGE

Chargebacks and a lack of affiliate fraud solutions

The web services company was facing an all-too-familiar problem. Lots of normal-looking transactions were taking place, making it seem like the company was earning a solid profit. Unfortunately, many “customers” were ultimately canceling their orders, dinging merchants with chargebacks.

“We were going to pay affiliates a lot of money, but because of chargebacks and other issues, we were actually losing money,” says Judith-Ann Sarjeant, who works as a security, fraud, and compliance specialist for the web services company.

What’s more, since the fraudsters were attacking the company’s sites, they were attacking AWS infrastructure by extension. Once AWS found out about the attacks, they immediately alerted the company, which then began searching for ad fraud detection solutions.

Finding solutions to some of the problems that were occurring, like sign up and payment fraud, was easy. When it came to solving the affiliate fraud problem, there weren’t as many solutions on the market.

“Affiliate fraud was a challenge,” Sarjeant continues. “When we spoke to fraud solution vendors, many said that they don’t do affiliates.”

SOLUTION

Combating the affiliate fraud problem with Anura

Sarjeant and her team continued to search for a powerful cloud based solution that would be easy to install. One day, Sarjeant was reading an article about a different topic and Anura, an ad fraud detection solution, was mentioned. She clicked a link to check it out.

After liking what she read, Sarjeant then reached out to Anura CEO Rich Kahn, scheduled a meeting based on that conversation, and arranged a demo. Sarjeant was impressed, so she and her team decided to give Anura a trial run in January 2020.

“The trial was really, really successful, so we ran full production mode in February,”

Sarjeant explains. “Since then, we’ve had a fantastic experience. The depth of analytics and everything Anura detect is impressive.”

According to Sarjeant, Anura was able to learn about the web services company’s environment quickly. Due to the solution’s machine learning capabilities, Anura is constantly learning more about the environment to become better at ad fraud detection as new methods of attack emerge.

“If there are any anomalies, they always alert us,” Sarjeant says. She adds that in the event her team ever runs into an issue, the Anura team is “very quick to respond.”

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RESULTS

Reliable fraud detection made easy with Anura

The decision to use Anura to solve affiliate ad fraud problems has already proven to be a smart one.

"We've been using Anura for less than six months, but it's worth every penny already," Sarjeant explains. "Any time I see fraud ratios go up, it prepares me for what comes next in terms of our affiliate network. I can always go to Anura, drill down, and find the issue at hand."

Thanks to Anura, fraud has now become part of the web services company's key performance indicators (KPIs), and the fraud measurement is taken directly from Anura.

For Sarjeant and her team, Anura is easy to use. It also has robust reporting functionality that makes sharing reports simple.

Recently, Sarjeant and her team ran an incident report about problems that occurred on two of the company's sites. Anura enabled them to pinpoint exactly what was happening.

"I can back up whatever I say with evidence from Anura," she says.

"The interface is easy to use, easy to administer, and you can easily extract information."

In addition to these benefits, the web services company has also enjoyed the following:

1 IMMEDIATE ROI

Anura was installed quickly, and it started delivering reliable results right away. "Nothing about the entire process was complicated," Sarjeant says. Now, when she begins her day, she checks three things: her inbox, her AWS environment, and the Anura dashboard.

2 NO FALSE POSITIVES

Anura's models and algorithms learned the company's environment quickly. "We can rely on the results we're getting," Sarjeant explains. "There are no false positives. It's all accurate information."

3 LESS RISK

Anura minimizes downtime, revenue loss, reputational risk, and chargebacks—which is a big deal, considering that too many chargebacks might cause a bank or processor to stop working with a company altogether. At the same time, Anura also gives you data you can use to predict where fraudsters might attack next. Add it all up, and it helps the web services company operate more profitably while meeting user expectations.

4 BETTER AFFILIATES

When fraud occurs, Sarjeant and her team are able to drill down and see who's committing fraud at the affiliate level. This enables them to work with only the best affiliates in their network while scaring fraudsters away.

5 INCREASED AGILITY

"At the end of the day, fraud is a cost, and we want to minimize the negative part of cost as much as we can," Sarjeant says. With more time and resources on hand, "Anura makes us a more agile and proactive organization." For example, any time Sarjeant notices a negative trend, she can provide evidence to her team within minutes, and then they can immediately start working to resolve the issue.

"Nothing about the entire process was complicated. It makes my life easy."

Don't just take our word for it.

Sarjeant absolutely encourages anyone who finds themselves dealing with ad fraud to give Anura a chance.

"They have a trial. Take advantage of the trial, run your experiments, and you will see results," Sarjeant says. "Try it before you buy it, and trust that it will help. It makes life easy."

Not only does Anura's fraud detection make life easy, but collaboration with the Anura team is a pleasure. "When I got my dev team to work with the dev team at Anura, it was practically flawless," Sarjeant concludes.

"There is nothing I can say negative about the entire process with Anura."

To learn more about how your organization can eliminate ad fraud, increase the performance of campaigns, and build a stronger affiliate network, request a demo of Anura.

[REQUEST A DEMO](#)