HomeToGo speeds up manual data investigation by up to 80% with Sisu

Accelerates KPI investigation, facilitates A/B test evaluation, and powers exploratory analysis to inform decision-making across the business.

HomeToGo, the marketplace with the world’s largest selection of vacation rentals, lists millions of offers from thousands of trusted partners to deliver the perfect accommodation—and great memories. With so much to offer and so many customers to serve, the Data & Analytics team at HomeToGo wanted to deliver greater value from data by scaling access and making data more usable—without creating an ‘army of analysts’ to answer the company’s growing, yet critical, questions.

Along with regular evaluation and innovation on their data tech stack, data experts at HomeToGo needed to augment their business intelligence workflows to extend the value of analysis beyond existing, traditional reports. The data team needed to see what was changing in their key metrics, as well as to gain deeper insights into why change was happening and what actions to take next. They felt an essential element of their stack was missing, one that they would help scale their data culture while powering business impact.

After evaluating and implementing Sisu Data’s Decision Intelligence Engine, HomeToGo was able to speed up data investigation by up to 80% to power decision-making across the entire business.

Some of HomeToGo’s key questions

**Conversion Rate**
What factors have the greatest impact on changes in conversion rate?

**Marketing Impact**
What factors are driving performance and efficient outcomes of our marketing efforts?

**Product Engagement**
Which user flows drive better product adoption and engagement?

Growing data + more data usage = bottlenecks

Prior to implementing Sisu, HomeToGo’s Data & Analytics team was searching for ways to reduce time spent on manual analysis, accelerate KPI investigation, increase A/B testing, and promote self-service and data engagement across the business.

When discussing their data philosophy, Stephan Claus, Director of Data Analytics at HomeToGo, shared, "We decentralized our data team so analysts could sit closer to the business to help teams answer their own questions and drive work independently. At the same time, we have a small team, and we needed to scale our output without constantly adding new pipelines and dashboards for every question. Our tech stack, therefore, has a focus on tools and processes geared towards flexibility and self-service."

As HomeToGo’s business and data continued to grow, it became increasingly clear that business intelligence alone wasn’t enough to scale the questions of the business. When a key business metric declined, the team sometimes dedicated over a week’s worth of manual analysis, testing all the potential factors and combinations of factors in an effort to diagnose what had happened. HomeToGo knew this wasn’t scalable and needed a better, faster way to perform analysis, speed up data exploration, and surface more actionable insights—while providing more business user engagement than static BI reports alone.
Augmenting BI workflows with decision intelligence

This was when HomeToGo decided to evaluate Sisu’s Decision Intelligence Engine to augment their existing BI workflow. While HomeToGo had visibility over what key metrics were changing, they were particularly drawn to “Sisu’s scalability, ability to reduce time spent on manual analysis, and intuitive UI for self-service analysis,” shared Claus.

This is when Athene Cook, Senior Data Analyst at HomeToGo, got involved to evaluate Sisu against the key goals of streamlining KPI investigation, facilitating A/B test evaluation, and developing Reporting 2.0—an ongoing initiative aimed to increase business user engagement beyond the PDF reports created by their BI tool. “We needed something that would reduce the time spent on manual slicing and dicing, promote self-service across the organization, and we needed our solution to enable us to avoid vendor lock-in,” shares Cook. Additionally, the Data & Analytics team at HomeToGo wanted to make sure they were selecting a solution that could handle the growing volume and complexity of their data.

To evaluate Sisu’s Decision Intelligence Engine, Athene Cook led a backtesting approach to measure how much faster (if at all) Sisu would have been able to diagnose the cause of a previous issue that HomeToGo’s Data & Analytics team had recently been tasked to solve. Cook shares, “We picked out historical test cases where key metrics declined, and then we were eventually able to figure out the cause. Since hindsight is 20/20, we fed Sisu data from around the time of the incidents and ran analyses to see whether or not Sisu could highlight the facts and key drivers that we now know caused those incidents. And sure enough, with Sisu, we got to the answers up to 80% faster than before.”

Empowering data-driven decision-making

After deciding to move forward with Sisu, the HomeToGo Data & Analytics team took a thoughtful approach to train employees across the organization—fostering their goal of creating a self-service data culture.

This approach included hosting a company-wide training, creating recordings for employees and new hires to reference, conducting deep-dive training for power users across departments, and building open lines of communications such as Slack channels and ongoing office hours for support.

Now, the HomeToGo Marketing team regularly uses Sisu to analyze and optimize performance. For example, they use Sisu to look at paid search to identify the main drivers of growth. This is especially impactful during the busy seasons for the company when it’s crucial to keep tabs on traffic development, understand where it’s coming from, and then guide stakeholders on where to lean in and pull back in order to drive the highest ROI during peak times.

Furthermore, the Product team uses Sisu’s group comparison functionality to evaluate A/B tests in order to enhance performance on the site. In a recent A/B test for an autocomplete website form flow, Sisu helped HomeToGo’s Product and UX Design teams uncover unintended friction for one of the groups. “When our Product team noticed engagement was down for the test group—which is the exact opposite of what you would expect to see, they used Sisu in collaboration with our UX Design team to walk through the user flow together and identify some unintended friction in the flow for the treatment group,” shares Cook. With so many factors to monitor, Sisu was able to quickly surface the issue to alert the teams that customers exposed to the test experienced an issue. This enabled them to quickly problem-solve by walking through the user flow to pinpoint and address the issue.

In addition to supporting decision-making across the business, Sisu has helped the Data & Analytics team scale their time, focus on strategic initiatives, and make the best use of their modern data stack. “Creating input for Sisu comes even more naturally because of our use of dbt; the value of having so many data points connected in one model enables Sisu to outperform every business analyst,” explains Claus. In fact, when their team recently migrated their data warehouse to Snowflake, Sisu’s Engineering team found a programmatic solution to update the metrics and data sources on the backend—making it so the HomeToGo Analytics team didn’t need to do any additional work for the migration.

With Sisu, HomeToGo is now able to leverage their growing data to support real-time exploration and power data-informed decision-making across the business.

“The volume of data available today can be intimidating to a lot of users, and it’s worth investing in anything that enables us to package it in a more straightforward way to help enable interaction with the data. Our goal is to help business users feel comfortable taking advantage of the data to inform decisions, and now Sisu helps our teams explore more data, discover why key metrics change faster, and make better decisions.”

Athene Cook Senior Data Analyst at HomeToGo