



Understanding Salesforce Wave Analytics Cloud

Data is futile, if you cannot convert it into actionable insights. **Wave Analytics** is the latest cutting-edge analytical tool from Salesforce that turns in-information into fruitful insights in real-time. Read on to know how Wave combines the power of Cloud + Analytics.

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WAVE PLATFORM OVERVIEW

Present day enterprises are powered by information. But information goes futile, unless it is actionable. In today's fast-paced world, extracting the latest and up-to-date information from the reams of available data, and converting such information into actionable insights in real time is a key component for success. Wave Analytics, the latest cutting-edge analytical tool from Salesforce serves this purpose admirably well.

Salesforce Analytics Cloud is an online analytic engine that pulls in data from Salesforce CRM apps automatically. Salesforce Wave Analytics Platform is an added layer above this cloud engine, hosting specific applications produced both by Salesforce and third parties.

The Wave Analytics platform connects data from multiple sources, facilitating integrated and interactive views of disparate data, and enables sharing such views in dashboards. It offers rich insights to business users, equipping them with the latest and the most relevant information, and empowering them to take timely action.

WAVE =

A CLOUD-BASED DATA PLATFORM BACK END

+

A DATA-ANALYSIS FRONT END

Wave offers:

Data-management service	<i>This includes end-user facing query-and-analysis capabilities</i>
Lenses	<i>Using Lenses, developers or power users can explore data in many ways</i>
Dashboards	<i>Facilitates persisted reporting and makes explicit key performance indicators</i>

ADVANTAGES OF WAVE PLATFORM

On the face of it, Wave appears as just another data-visualization tool for sales data, similar to Salesforce.com and Force.com, which also have the Analytics Cloud built on it. However, the scope of Wave goes much beyond simple analytic function. It is much more powerful, and has superior analytic, processing, and visualization capabilities, among other advantages.

Research by Harvard Business Review Analytics Services in association with Salesforce

71% of marketers regard ease of use as an extremely important attribute for getting value from new marketing solutions

Currently, only 42% of marketers consider their marketing technology as easy to use

Only 34% of marketers can access the analytics they require from their marketing technology

So, Wave is ideally poised to fill the gap perfectly.

- ***Wide and Deep Analysis of Data***

The Wave platform makes it easy to analyze and make sense of large swathes of data. The platform is capable of pulling in Salesforce sales, service, and marketing data, along with data from any third-party apps, desktop data, and any public data the user chooses to bring into the mix. Wave easily draws in data from Chatter collaboration, Data.com enrichment data, CSV, Informatica, Radian social data, and a host of other external systems. The platform is even capable of analyzing confidential data that has to remain on the “other” side of the firewall.

The recently launched **Wave Dataset Designer tool** makes it possible to connect any external data source with just a few clicks, a big leap from writing code for the purpose. For instance, a customer service manager may use this tool to connect with a sensor attached to an IoT device, and use data from such source to track usage.

- ***Powerful Analytical Capabilities***

Wave offers powerful analytical capabilities, including search based exploration, key value pair data ingestion and inverted index, which facilitates analysis of data in powerful ways, which is not possible in legacy analytical engines.

Salesforce’s **recent acquisition of BeyondCore** places it in good stead to further strengthen its analytic capabilities, and gain strength in the Artificial Intelligence space. Through the acquisition, Salesforce plans to extend smart data discovery and advanced analytics capabilities across its entire platform, including Wave.

- ***Powerful Processing Capabilities***

The Wave platform overcomes the inherent limitations of speed and processing power faced by the traditional Salesforce Reports and Dashboards. There is 100% vertical integration, with no abstraction between the user and the data.

Wave’s powerful parallel processing capabilities enables speed searching even while accommodating big data, thereby facilitating real-time analytics, suitable for taking much needed instant decisions in today’s business world. It offers near-infinite scalability as well, with virtually no data sets being too massive for Wave to address.

The real-time analytics manifest as constantly updating dashboards, reports, and charts.

- ***Powerful Visualization Capabilities***

Wave comes with dynamic interactive visualizations that makes it possible to churn data in any way required. Take a look at the comparison table given below:

Traditional Salesforce Platform	<p><i>Offers visualization tools such as:</i></p> <p><i>horizontal bar charts, vertical bar charts, line charts, pie charts, donut charts, funnel charts, scatter charts, gauge charts, metric charts, table charts, visual force pages</i></p>
Wave Analytics Dashboard	<p><i>Offers a host of more dynamic charts:</i></p> <p><i>bar charts, stacked bar charts, column charts, heat map charts, calendar map charts, scatter plot, timeline chart, pivot table, compare table, values table, parallel coordinates, horizontal dot plot, vertical dot plot, matrix chart</i></p>

The powerful visualization capabilities on offer gives a big thrust to business intelligence and analytics, and makes it easier for users to access, explore and handle information. *The sleek and seamless “look and feel” is the icing on the cake.*

OTHER FEATURES OF WAVE PLATFORM

- **Flexibility**

Wave enables self-service and facilitates deep customization of analytics. The platform empowers users to create customized dashboards powered by the latest data, to monitor key business metrics as they see fit.

The hardest task in most analytic platforms is extracting data from legacy systems and filtering or transforming it to suit the requirements of the predefined data model. Wave is rather based on a key-value-store, SAQL database, which adopts schema-on-read approach. The absence of predefined schemas (cubes), and the elimination of the requirement to adapt all data to a fixed model make it very easy to bring in third-party app data, public data, or desktop data into the data store.

The absence of predefined schemas also makes it easy for end users to query for any question, without limiting themselves to those baked into a predefined data model. In today's fast changing world, where the scope and nature of data changes in a matter of few days, relying on predefined data models that takes months to develop is a sure recipe for ruin.

- **Simplicity**

Waves make complex processes simple, and seamless. In fact, it empowers end-users to make their own complex analysis with just a few clicks, swipes, or taps, cutting off the data scientist “middlemen.”

Admins can easily create and assign permission sets, and enable or hide thumbnails lenses and dashboards on-the-fly. Wave leverages the power of simplicity, fulfilling most needs and requirements through lenses and dashboard views, and ad-hoc "group, measure, filter, view," and "action" options. Several dashboard tools make things easy and simple for the end-user as well.

- **Security**

Wave is cloud based, and comes with robust security as well, meeting rigorous data-security and data-privacy requirements of today's age. The platform picks up its security and access controls hierarchies from the Salesforce platform.

- **Mobile-First**

The Wave platform is developed as mobile-first, making it extremely compatible with mobile devices. A mobile optimized design offers not just convenience, but facilitates **ANYWHERE-ANYTIME ON-THE-GO** availability, taking real-time analytics to the next level.

Once up and running, users simply need to redirect existing ETL processes and point them at the Wave API, enabling companies to empower users on their mobile devices overnight, “with the flip of a switch.”

Even while being perfectly optimized for mobile devices, Wave offers web interfaces for laptops and desktops. Device support is in sync with Salesforce's overall pattern, with hybrid apps blending native and HTML5 capabilities for iOS, Android, and Windows devices.

WAVE APPS

Users gain the power of the Wave platform through apps. The Wave platform offers several “off-the shelf” apps, making complex tasks easy and seamless.

Salesforce itself offers some intuitive in-house apps.

- **Sales Wave Analytics** helps sales teams increase visibility, discover new opportunities and track records.
- **Service Wave Analytics** offers a new way to check case trends, agent efficiency, and channel optimization, allowing enterprises to take actions based on the changing information.
- **Wave Analytics for B2B Marketing app** pulls in data from disparate and unrelated third party sources, from Google Analytics to webinar and event management platforms, and more, to offer a consolidated view of the marketing and CRM data. It offers accurate insights into key metrics such as lead volume, lead conversion rates, pipeline velocity, and campaign ROI. This gives users better visibility on the campaign performance. This app perfectly suits the changed requirements of marketers, who now have to keep track of customer journeys across a variety of channels, quite distinct from simply delivering one-way, outbound campaigns in the past.
- Salesforce's Wave for Financial Services Cloud offers rich insights aimed at optimizing revenues. For instance, it makes explicit:
 - Clients affected by recent trends in the market or;
 - Clients who have made a major deposit and who now require extra guidance on their holdings.

Some of the prominent **Salesforce partners have launched** a plethora of other specialty apps, serving several specific purposes. While such readymade apps offer a host of benefits, the real power of Wave is derived by Salesforce partners who build up their own custom analytics apps. For instance, partners can easily build a Wave-based app for business executives, offering visibility and actionable insights into the complete customer lifecycle, quotes, contracts, orders, revenue— all in one system, sparing them from the hassles of having to rely on complex and often archaic analytics tools. Wave is already in action with major Salesforce users and companies getting into the Wave bandwagon.

WAVE- THE CHALLENGES

The Wave platform goes a long way in allowing Salesforce to catch up with other large vendors in areas such as machine learning and overall analytics, where there is considerable scope for improvement. However, Wave is not without its share of hitches and concerns. A few of them are mentioned below:

- **Backend Tools**

Key concerns remain with the back-end tools that developers have to use, though end users might remain unaffected. Salesforce's home-grown database is powered by Salesforce Analytic Query Language (SAQL), used by developers to set up ready-to-use analytic tools for end-users. SAQL (is in pilot phase) is still to mature to the level of SQL, and catching up will be a tall task, considering SQL took 30 years to reach the level of maturity it has attained today.

- **Pricing**

Another key area of concern is the relatively high pricing. Accessing the Salesforce Wave Cloud Analytics requires a Wave Platform license. Specific pricing information for the Wave Platform is available from Salesforce on request, but reports indicate the front end Wave "Explorer" business-user subscriptions to be **\$125 per user per month** and the "Builder" admin/power-user subscriptions at \$250 per user per month. More significantly, enterprises would have to shell out about \$40,000-per-company, per-month for the back-end infrastructure.

The Wave platform has a cap of 400 users, 50 concurrent queries and 250 million registered rows per platform licenses. The way to increase these limits is by purchasing multiple platform licenses.

Salesforce would perhaps have to re-look pricing and iron out the few chinks in the armor before Wave goes center stage. However, indications are Salesforce is working on that front as well. Salesforce now offers its Sales Cloud customers improved reports and dashboards based on Wave's visualization, encouraging the possibility of such users adding the full capabilities of the Wave Analytics Cloud to their arsenal.

It is still early days for Wave, but what is clear is that the capabilities provided by the platform offers a world of benefits. Faster, simpler, data-driven insight for all is always a win-win proposition.

According to Marc Benioff, CEO of Salesforce. "As a company, you need to get to the future first, ahead of your customers, and be ready to greet them when they arrive." The latest Wave developments facilitate companies to do exactly that.

ABOUT SUYATI

Suyati is a fast-growing, digital transformation solutions company that helps you rebuild your customer experience for the digital consumer. We collaborate with businesses to strategize and implement impactful digital initiatives that position our clients ahead of the competition. We are digital-first and we focus on delivering digital transformation solutions that support your various engagement strategies. With our niche and rich expertise in a wide range of technologies and services- CMS, CRM, e-commerce, Cloud, IoT, Data Analytics, and Product Engineering- we help companies leverage their best on web/cloud/mobile platforms.

We enable you to create insights driven customer engagement across all touch points to build a unified marketing approach. Our custom technology solutions have been deployed successfully in companies across the globe, especially in the US, UK, Europe and Australia.



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