

Freshpaint








by Director of Product

Customer Data Platforms

Details

Review Date	08/31/2023
Purchase Date	Q4'22
Implementation Time	2 weeks
Product Still in Use	Yes
Purchase Amount	\$12-20K platform cost annually plus per user cost
Intent to Renew	100%
Review Source	Elion

Product Rating

Product Overall	 5.0
Use Case Fit	 5.0
Ease of Use	 4.0
API	 4.5
Integrations	 4.5
Support	 5.0
Value	 5.0

About the Reviewer

Purchasing Team User
Implementation Team Product Oversight

Reviewer Organization

Virtual-First Provider Behavioral Health

Reviewer Tech Stack

Intercom Iterable Mixpanel
Salesforce Zoom

Other Products Considered

Hightouch Segment

Summary

- **Product Usage:** The reviewer's company applies Freshpaint for tracking user behavior in their medical app, providing data for product analytics, in-app chat support via Intercom, and messaging through Iterable.
- **Strengths:** Freshpaint shines in areas of healthcare-focused data handling, excellent support responsiveness, and continual platform enhancements.
- **Weaknesses:** The reviewer believes that Freshpaint could improve its user interface and potentially make its documentation more beginner-friendly.
- **Overall Judgment:** The reviewer values Freshpaint as a key component in their data analytics strategy, appreciating its robust healthcare data capabilities, and believes selecting it was the correct decision.

Review

So today, we're chatting about Freshpaint and how it's used at your company. Before we jump into that, could you give a brief overview of the company and your role there?

We offer virtual intensive outpatient therapy for high-acuity patients. Everything we do is online.

My position is director of product. We build products primarily for our own clinicians and patients. We have an app for patients to use and another one for clinicians, along with some internal systems to connect all the data. My responsibility is to oversee the development of all these things.

How long have you been using Freshpaint?

About two and a half years.

What drove you to look for a product like Freshpaint?

I was looking for data analytics tools to gain a better understanding of how users are utilizing our product. Specifically, I wanted to know where our clinicians were going and gather insights into what aspects are important and what aren't. Usually, I would use tools like Segment or directly approach product event analytics vendors like Amplitude or Mixpanel. However, one of the challenges with these tools is dealing with Protected Health Information (PHI). It's not a huge concern when it comes to clinicians, but when it involves client or patient behavior, capturing their usage data becomes a tricky situation due to the presence of PHI. Traditionally, many vendors were reluctant to sign Business Associate Agreements (BAAs). However, I believe this situation is gradually changing.

What drew me to Freshpaint was that when we wanted to implement analytics using tools like Amplitude, we had to go through the process of de-identifying everything. This involved the engineering team developing an abstraction layer that would remove any identifiable information from the events before sending them off for analysis with Amplitude, Mixpanel, or other similar tools. This was not only time-consuming, but also added to the maintenance costs. Therefore, I started looking for vendors in this space and came across Freshpaint. It was a great alternative with a HIPAA and PHI focus.

What were the key requirements you were using to evaluate vendors?

In any customer data platform (CDP), I'm looking for a functionality where I can send an event to multiple destinations. I want to implement something once and be able to benefit from it across vendors, such as my CRM, email marketing system, and product analytics platform. Instead of integrating with each platform separately, I want them to integrate with one. That was our main requirement.

When evaluating CDPs, I pay a lot of attention to whether they are willing to sign a BAA. One thing that stood out about Freshpaint was that they were able to sign it and allowed us to send them PHI. If you look into the details of the BAAs for other vendors, they will sign it, but they usually request that we don't send them PHI. This was one thing that really differentiated Freshpaint. They expected us to send them PHI, and they were going to help us de-identify that data and send it downstream. So if we don't have a BAA in place with a downstream vendor, Freshpaint will de-identify the data for us before we send it to that vendor. This was a key piece of functionality that helped us choose Freshpaint over other vendors.

Who are the main vendors you compared Freshpaint against?

I believe Segment was the other CDP option we considered. They're considered the leader in the field, and I actually used them at a previous company. They perform well and can handle large amounts of data. They were initially the primary vendor we considered. At the time they wouldn't sign a BAA, but they are now willing to do so. However, even with the BAA in place, implementing a HIPAA-compliant version Segment can be a bit complicated. They have a roughly 38-page guide on how to do it, so you still have to jump through some hoops to ensure the protection of health information.

In terms of other CDP vendors, there's Heap and Hightouch. I evaluated them as well, but not as extensively as Segment. There are other vendors out there, but those were the ones I looked at the most closely.

How did the other vendors stack up to Freshpaint?

So, when it comes to functionality and native support for different vendors, in terms of sending data to downstream companies, Segment definitely supports more vendors. They have more integrations and out-of-the-box options compared to Freshpaint. But that's expected, since Segment has been around for much longer. However, Freshpaint does have all the destinations that we needed, so it wasn't a deal-breaker for us.

In terms of other functionality, both Segment and Freshpaint offer similar features. You can send events, user data, and group information. The big players like Amplitude and Mixpanel have a group functionality to track user events across an account or company, and Freshpaint supports that as well.

One unique feature that Freshpaint has, which I don't think Segment has but they may have added it since, is the ability to replay events. This is really helpful when switching products or vendors. For example, if I switch from using Mixpanel to Amplitude for product analytics, I can replay past events that I had already sent to Freshpaint. This saves a lot of time and effort. Another useful feature is the auto tracking that Freshpaint offers. If you have Freshpaint installed on your application and you want to track how many people clicked a specific button, you can outfit that event and then retroactively pull in historical data to get immediate results. It made implementation time much quicker to be able to access that historical data, which was a big selling point for us.

How do they compare from a pricing perspective?

Segment appeared to be cheaper, since they didn't charge a platform fee. In terms of user pricing, I believe both Segment and Freshpaint were quite similar. Overall, the pricing seemed to be relatively standardized, but there were some customizable options available depending on the customer's needs. For instance, if you wanted to share data or send events to your Snowflake database, that would come with an additional cost.

What ultimately led you to go with Freshpaint?

The key driver for me in choosing Freshpaint was the focus on healthcare and HIPAA. Since Segment is now part of Twilio, a larger company, they don't prioritize the needs of healthcare users. Freshpaint, on the other hand, offers tools that help mitigate the risk of sending PHI to unintended destinations. I can sign a legitimate BAA with Freshpaint and use their tools to ensure that PHI is only sent to approved vendors. This level of control, down to the event level, was a major selling point for me. If I do want to identify someone, I can set up a hash in Freshpaint and they handle the hashing process. It was a relief to have these features outsourced rather than having to develop them internally.

Another benefit that stood out with Freshpaint is their excellent support. Unlike many other vendors, they are quick to respond. I've had instances where I would send them an email at 6 p.m. on a Friday and get a response by 6:30 p.m., so they're super responsive.

How did you find the sales process with Freshpaint?

Yeah, easy. I think they have a really reasonable approach. We discussed what we wanted and they listened, and then they came up with a plan that made sense, taking into consideration our needs. I never got the feeling that they were being pushy. Throughout the whole process, they've been fair and open to negotiating and collaborating with us on different things.

How was the onboarding and setup process?

Yeah, when you sign up, they assign you an account manager who is there to assist with onboarding. You can reach out to them whenever you have questions. We had a shared Slack channel where we could ask them questions on an ongoing basis. They were really quick to respond and worked closely with us.

The setup itself is actually quite easy. You just need to add a JavaScript snippet to your website for basic tracking. If you want more detailed events or events that are triggered from your back-end, or if you want to update user properties, those are considered precision events. The main work involved is defining your taxonomy and deciding what you want to set up, but setting up each event or user property is actually very straightforward. With the dedicated attention of one engineer for a few weeks, you can get everything fully set up and have your application sending all the events to Freshpaint.

What use cases do you use Freshpaint for?

Currently, we have three main use cases. The first one is product analytics. We want to gain insights into how our users, whether they are clinicians or patients, are utilizing our product. It helps us understand their engagement and usage patterns.

The second use case is support. We use Intercom as our in-app chat support platform. We stream the same user properties and events to Intercom, so our support team can have all the relevant information when responding to users. This includes details like the page they were on when they reached out or, for clinicians, their role within the company.

Lastly, we use our data for messaging purposes. This includes sending emails or text messages. We transfer this information to Iterable, a downstream vendor. Our marketing team can then utilize this data to send outbound emails to potential clients or partners. We also use it to notify our patients about important details like appointment confirmations. For instance, we can send a transactional message saying, "Your appointment is scheduled for today. Can you please confirm?" To achieve this, Freshpaint sends an event to Iterable called something like "appointments scheduled." This event includes information such as the timing and type of session. In Iterable, we use this information to create a journey for reminders.

What features of Freshpaint do you use?

The primary feature we use is sending user or identify call updates that identify the clinician or patient associated with each event, and then we send events for each of these. Freshpaint collects all of this data for us.

We do have some auto tracking in place. For example, we don't have events set up for every single button click on our website. However, if we want to track a specific button click, we can go back and enable auto tracking for it, such as for page views. Occasionally, we use Freshpaint's event replays. This allows us to go back and see how many times someone clicked on a button. We define an event for that action, and then replay it to gather data on it.

Freshpaint also provides a HIPAA-allow list and whitelist. We make use of these features, especially when it comes to our patient users. When we send information downstream to a vendor like Mixpanel, we ensure that we don't include any identifying information such as the patient's name. This way, we can still perform analysis on the data without pushing any PHI to the vendor. I can denote in Freshpaint if we have a BAA in place with a downstream vendor, which helps limit our risk and PHI exposure.

Are there any major aspects of the product you don't use?

Recently, they have been placing a strong emphasis on marketing. In the industry, there's a lot of negative coverage surrounding pixels. Many healthcare websites have Google and Facebook pixels installed, so these companies can wind up with access to healthcare data if, for example, someone submits a form on their site. Freshpaint seems to be highly specialized in addressing this issue and has achieved significant success in this field. Although I haven't personally used their solution, I do know it's something we will likely be investigating.

What would you say are overall strengths and weaknesses of Freshpaint?

Yeah, their strength is definitely their focus on HIPAA and PHI, making them a great solution for that. However, one weakness is that their UI can be a bit clunky in some areas. Additionally, their documentation is sometimes lacking, but they make up for it with their excellent support. Their support team is very responsive and helpful. Another strength is their continuous development. They constantly add new features and improve their platform. I've been using their service for a couple of years and have witnessed the growth and increased functionality of their platform. Whenever I've encountered problems and shared them with their team, I've seen solutions implemented within a few weeks. They are definitely a fast-moving team that values customer feedback and strives to build new things.

Have you found the product to be reliable and relatively stable?

Absolutely. During the entire time I've been working with Freshpaint, I have never encountered any kind of service outage. There was this one incident about a year and a half ago when they informed us via email that one of their downstream vendors was experiencing an outage, which did affect them for a brief period. However, once the vendor was back online, Freshpaint quickly replayed all the events, and everything was back to normal. So overall, I have had no issues with outages.

As for bugs, there have been a few instances where we initially believed that something wasn't functioning as expected. However, in each of these cases, we reached out to Freshpaint's support team, and after investigation, we realized that the problem actually stemmed from our own error. So, the reliability and bug-free nature of Freshpaint have been consistently excellent, and we haven't encountered any issues in that regard.

How would you characterize the experience of building against their APIs?

Yeah, so it's a bit of a mix. You incorporate their platform and SDK into your application, but you also interact with their APIs to send HTTP events. So, it's sort of a combination of both when it comes to the development process.

How was their documentation and developer experience?

They have a lot of documentation, but if you're not familiar with product event analytics, it can be challenging to figure out exactly what to do. However, if you're comfortable in that area, their documentation should be sufficient. There have been instances where we needed clarification on how something works and had to ask them questions. Overall, I think the developer experience is okay, but I can't say for certain since I'm not a developer.

How did the out-of-the-box integrations work?

Yeah, so Intercom is a good example. The first time I implemented Freshpaint, it was surprisingly easy to integrate Intercom. I actually went live accidentally because there were just two buttons, and suddenly someone was clicking on Intercom within our application. So their out-of-the-box integration is pretty seamless. I can't list all of them, but Mixpanel, Intercom, Salesforce – these are all very simple to set up and implement. I think you can have Intercom up and running in just 10 minutes. It's just a matter of clicking buttons.

Overall, did you feel like they had a large selection of marketplace integrations, and were they effective?

They offer a wide range of options, including popular ones for product analytics, CRM, and support. I didn't notice any significant gaps in their offering. Additionally, they have a workaround solution where you can connect to any destination, although it may require some effort on your part. This means you can set up your own destinations as well, making it compatible with any vendor. However, if you heavily depend on a less common vendor, they may not have specific support for that. Overall, I think they have pretty good coverage.

How would you characterize their account management and support?

Their support team is very responsive and dedicated. Other companies set up SLAs around support, but sometimes we still struggle to get answers to basic questions. I've had no issues with Freshpaint's account management or support team. They are always willing to jump on a call, understand your problems, and work through them. Overall, I can only say positive things about them.

Do you think you made the right call going forward with Freshpaint?

Yeah, I think so. It's difficult to quantify the value, but the amount of time we would have spent on developing individual integrations with all of these tools would have been really high. And these integrations are crucial to our current operations. So I do believe it was the right decision. We rarely have to think about Freshpaint. It just performs its function flawlessly, set it and forget it. And whenever we want to expand its capabilities, we simply add to it, and it just works. So yeah, I feel good about that decision and all the valuable things we have been able to accomplish as a result.

Do you see any particular areas for growth with the product?

I think the primary area for improvement lies within their user interface. The product itself mainly operates in the background, but I believe the interface could be more tailored to product managers or marketing professionals. This would make it clearer where data is going and why. Even for developers, apart from documentation, troubleshooting is important. Freshpaint provides a nice live view where you can observe incoming events during development. However, there is no way to go back in time and review an event sent yesterday. It would be helpful to see how it appeared in

Freshpaint and whether it was successfully sent to the intended destination or if it failed for some reason. It seems like there is room for growth there.

Any other general advice for folks who are trying to evaluate and select these types of products?

Yeah, I think when it comes to using a CDP, you need to consider the big picture of your data analytics strategy. This is especially important in the healthcare industry, where we need to ensure that everything is interconnected. So when you're looking to purchase a CDP, you should think about it in relation to the specific use cases you want to achieve with it and how it aligns with your overall data setup. For example, if you already have a data warehouse, how will the CDP integrate with it? Will all the events be sent there too? Or will it be separate? You also need to decide what sort of data should be sent to the CDP and what should not. It's important to take a holistic approach and consider where and why you're sending PHI to certain places. This should be your starting point when selecting a vendor: identifying your crucial use cases and understanding how the CDP fits into your company's architecture.