Business challenge

After developing a solution to help simplify the vehicle inspection process for new auto insurance customers, Grupo Planetun needed help improving the success rate for customers using the new process.

Transformation

Working with the IBM® Garage, Planetun created a first-to-market solution for insurance companies using the IBM Watson® Visual Recognition service on IBM Cloud™. The Garage group also helped Planetun transform an existing monolithic application to a more modern architecture based on microservices.

Results

Eliminates rework
for insurance companies and their customers by providing near-real-time feedback on submitted photos

Cuts costs for insurance providers
by reducing time needed to onboard new auto insurance customers

Creates a flexible infrastructure
based on microservices and IBM Cloud so Planetun can offer its customers only the services they need

Grupo Planetun

An innovative visual recognition solution helps a growing insurance industry

Planetun is an insurtech company that specializes in developing technology solutions for the insurance industry. It created an image regulation workflow application used by many large insurance companies in Brazil. The company was founded in 1996 and is based in São Paulo, Brazil.

"Understanding a bit of what Watson could bring us in terms of image recognition and solutions via artificial intelligence, we decided to work with IBM."

—Henrique Mazieiro,
Chief Executive Officer and
Co-Founder of Grupo Planetun

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Brazil's growing insurance industry

The insurance marketplace in Brazil has a lot of room for growth. "Only 30 percent of the automotive market has insurance, insurance for houses is around 10 percent and for cell phones only 2 percent," says Henrique Mazieiro, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of Planetun. One source of slow growth for the industry is the high cost of providing insurance. To increase adoption rates, insurance companies seek ways to drive down costs.

As an insurtech company, Planetun creates technology solutions that can help insurance companies reduce their operational costs. The company developed a solution to help streamline the vehicle inspection process for new car insurance customers. In the past, when a customer requested insurance, the average wait time was five days for an inspector to take pictures of the vehicle, delaying the initiation of the policy. The new solution enables the customer to take the picture of the vehicle. When the customer requests insurance coverage, Planetun forwards the customer a text link to the online application. The customer can then take pictures of his or her vehicle and upload them to the Planetun application. "We began to make these images available to the insurance company in an average of five hours and 30 minutes," says

Mazieiro. "With this process alone, we delivered a cost reduction of at least 50 percent for the insurance company and a reduction in process time of 60 percent."

Though the new system was more efficient, Planetun found that approximately 30 percent of the pictures provided by customers were not usable. Pictures were taken at the wrong angle or failed to show all the necessary parts of the vehicle, which required Planetun to request the customer redo the photos. To make the system more effective, the business needed decrease the percentage of unusable photos.

A flexible, cloud-based infrastructure

After attending the Think Brazil conference and learning about IBM Watson offerings, Planetun realized that it could solve its photo issue using Watson™ technology. "Understanding a bit of what Watson could bring us in terms of image recognition and solutions via artificial intelligence, we decided to work with IBM," says Mazieiro.

The company engaged the IBM Garage to help design the solution. Planetun chose to work with the Garage for several reasons. "The exchange of experience between the IBM team and our team of developers was very important. We were looking for a

partnership and learning, both in terms of Garage methodology and technically," says Mazieiro.

The first minimum viable project (MVP) that Planetun developed with the Garage team addressed the unusable photo problem. The Watson Visual Recognition service on IBM Cloud enables the company to analyze submissions in near-real-time and inform customers immediately if their images will not be usable, giving them the opportunity to retake and resubmit the photos.

The IBM group also used agile methodology to help Planetun convert its existing monolithic application infrastructure to cloud-based microservices, which gives the business greater flexibility. By breaking up its applications into smaller components, it's now easier to build a new service or maintain an existing one. "In the past, we used a non-cloud hosting company and now this new product is 100 percent cloud," says Mazieiro. "The IBM Cloud has brought flexibility, security and scalability to all our processes."

In addition to helping Planetun staff integrate the Watson Visual Recognition service into its application, the Garage team also helped them implement newer technology, like the IBM Cloud Kubernetes Service, which provides a managed service for application and workflow automation, security and scalability. After some initial discomfort with the change, the

Planetun technology team has embraced the new methodology. "The first moments of change create a little bit of mistrust, discomfort," says Mazieiro. "But now our team members have become 100 percent supportive of the use of microservices and the cloud environment."

Cutting costs and eliminating rework

The project with the IBM Garage group helped Planetun achieve its goal of reducing the number of unusable photos submitted by its customers. "By using Watson here in the process, we have a very large cost reduction because there is a reduction of work; in fact, rework is trending towards zero," says Mazieiro. "And the solution makes it much more convenient for the customer."

Incorporating Watson Visual Recognition service into its application has boosted Planetun's position within the marketplace in Brazil. "That was a radical change, because we managed to take to market the first image recognition solution aimed at the insurance market for inspection, which did not really exist before," says Mazieiro. Plus, by adopting the microservices infrastructure, Planetun can provide greater flexibility to the insurance companies it serves. If the customer wants only the Watson Visual Recognition service, Planetun can provide it; if the customer wants only an odometer validation module,

Planetun can provide it. "Because our infrastructure was built on microservices and each system has its own API, we have so much more flexibility," says Mazieiro.

The Planetun technology teams have benefitted from the knowledge gained through working with the Garage group. "Today I have a technology team that I believe is up-to-date with the market and that has a new vision of the path that we are going to follow," says Mazieiro.

Solution component

- IBM® Cloud™
- IBM Cloud Kubernetes Services
- IBM Garage
- IBM Watson® Visual Recognition

Take the next step

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