piano | *The Salt Lake Tribune*

The Salt Lake Tribune converts suspicious users into group subscribers with Piano

By using Suspicious Activity Reports, The Salt Lake Tribune supercharged group subscriptions to drive more revenue.

The Salt Lake Tribune started its digital subscription model on January 31, 2018 and used Piano to support the launch. By 2020, reader revenue had tripled, and the publication became the first metropolitan paper to operate fully from a nonprofit model.

But Claudia Laws, Marketing and Analytics Director at The Salt Lake Tribune, knew that she could demonstrate even greater ROI from Piano's capabilities. By launching Piano's Suspicious Activity Report*, the paper was able to easily identify hundreds of shared logins—and drive them to convert to group subscriptions. This resulted in a 2% increase in revenue while growing the core customer base.

* Suspicious activity is defined by Piano as users who access content on more than one device at the same time from different locations.

The Salt Lake Tribune was concerned they had a login sharing issue. Although its terms of use clearly stated that each login was limited to only 5 editions, there was no structure in place to hold subscribers accountable.

In her role, it was difficult for Laws to uncover exactly which subscribers were violating their terms. She had to slice and dice data based on user location, IP address, email extensions and simultaneous logins to pull together a monthly list of potential violators. It took her a lot of time to compile, and due to all the disparate data points, she felt the results couldn't fully be trusted.

As she struggled to quickly identify suspicious activity and the users associated with it, The Salt Lake Tribune sought to expand its digital subscription model to groups. As of May 2020, the paper only had two group subscriptions—which only existed because the customers had reached out to inquire for them directly. Laws thought that if she had a streamlined source of truth about suspicious activity, she could easily pave a path toward converting those users into group subscribers instead.
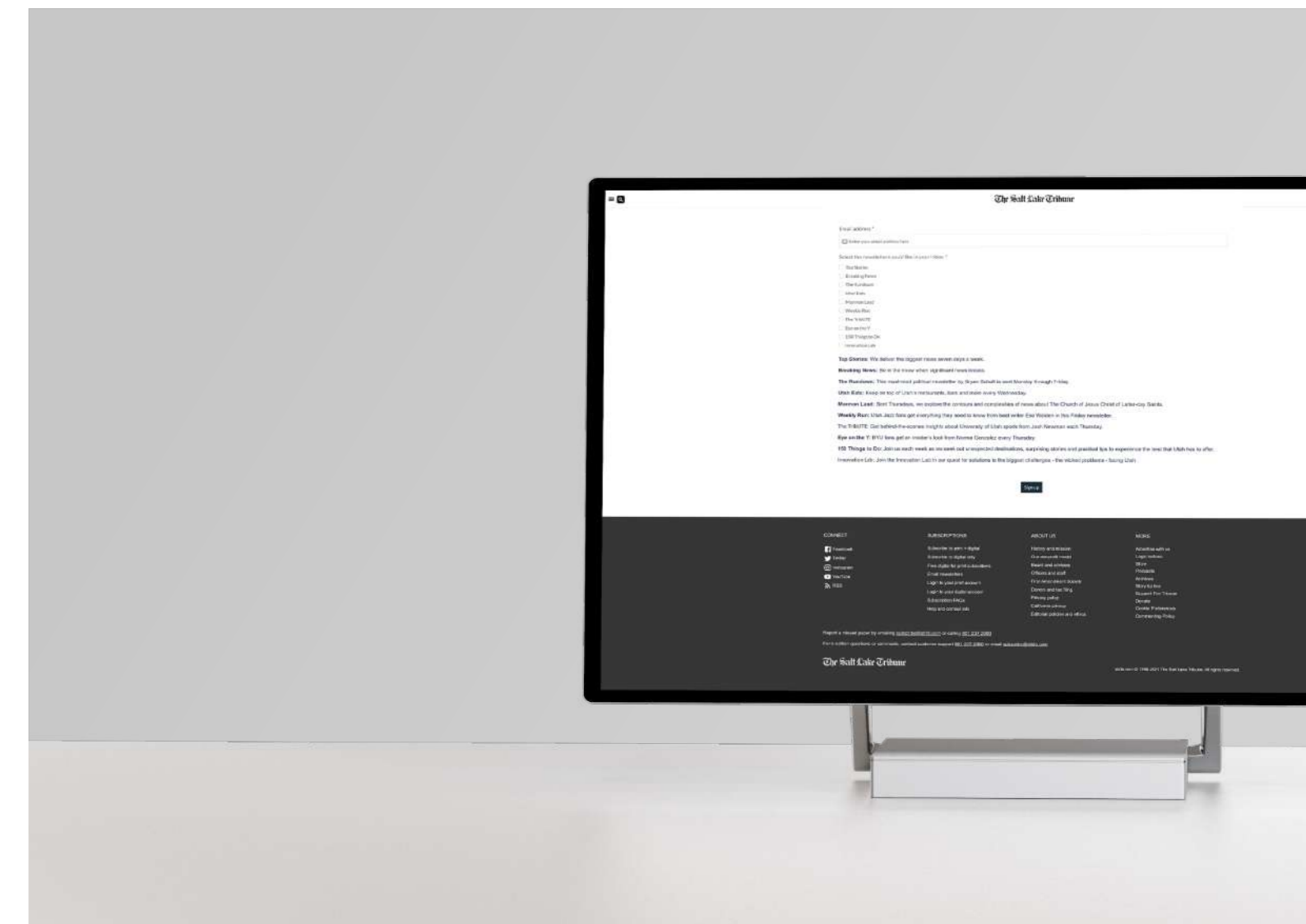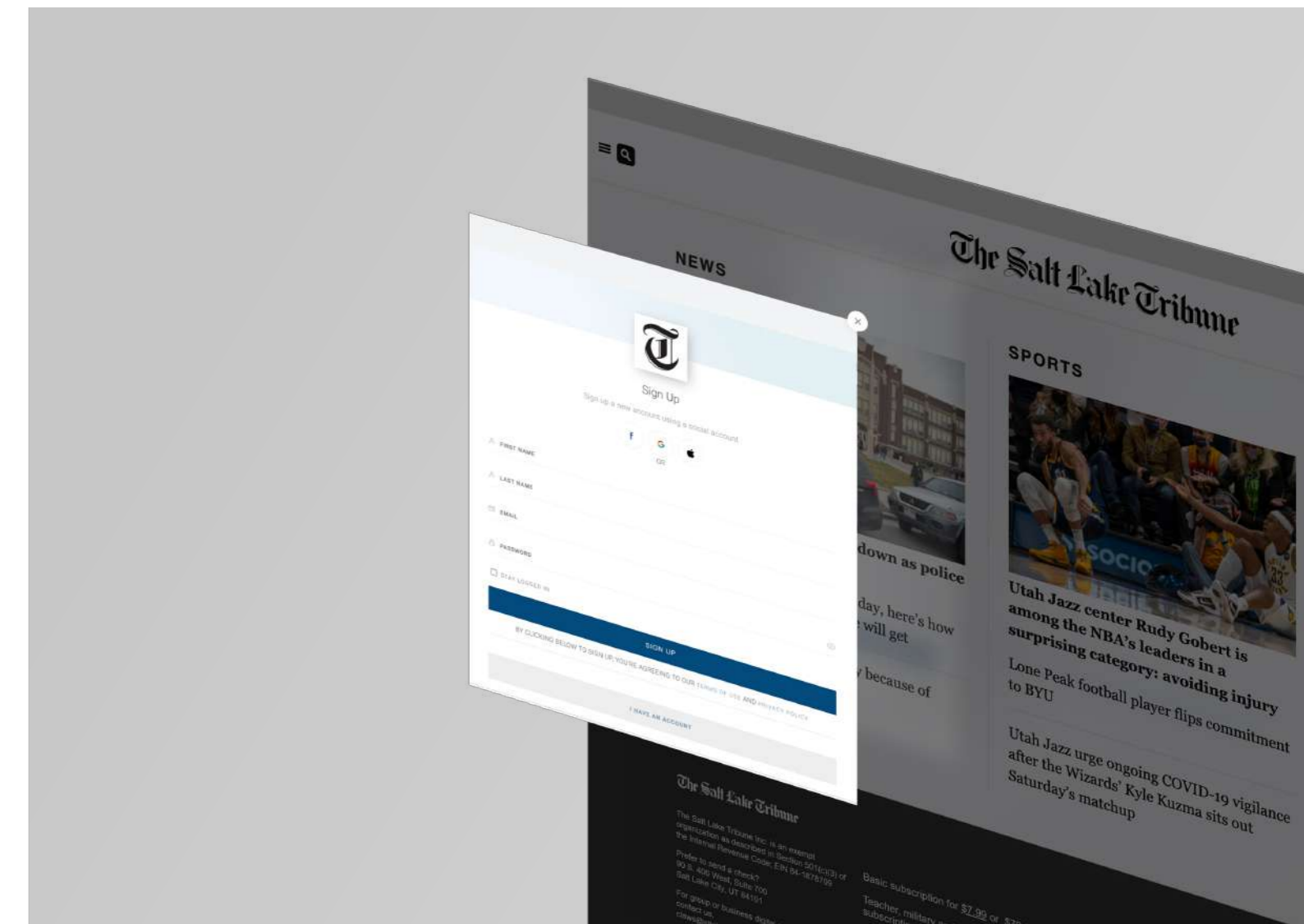
With Piano's Suspicious Activity Report, Laws was able to once and for all identify exactly which users were violating their terms of service. As part of Composer, the Suspicious Activity Report helps businesses combat the rising trend of password sharing by monitoring the level of sharing on gated sites and clearly identifying those users.

Documenting suspicious activity was no longer a tedious, monthly activity. Instead, Laws could log into Composer, make two clicks, and immediately see who was sharing their password beyond The Salt Lake Tribune's terms of use.

Armed with complete, correct data, Laws used a three-email sequence to notify the users of their violation and convert each individual into a group subscriber. As a result, The Salt Lake Tribune's number of group subscriptions grew from 2 to well over 250, an increase of more than 2400%.

Although the paper was not accustomed to supporting group subscriptions at scale, Piano was able to support this new digital subscription model with ease. Laws noted the simplicity of the feature, sharing that the "very fast process" allowed her to spend less than 5 minutes on setting up each new group subscription.

2 years to 3x revenue
from digital subscriptions

25 suspicious users
identified per month

2% revenue increase from
group subscriptions

The Salt Lake Tribune will continue using the Suspicious Activity Report to drive its group subscription sales. With proof of the feature's value, the paper is doubling down on the approach, deploying a team of three people to focus on converting the shared logins used by local hotels, schools and businesses into group subscriptions.

The publication intends to uncover even more opportunities for conversion in partnership with Piano. Laws noted that Piano's support has been invaluable to her role:

" Having somebody who has that one to one touch to say, 'This is something that can drive revenue and make you look good,' has a huge impact."

ABOUT PIANO

Piano helps organizations understand and influence customer behavior by putting the power of insights and logic into the hands of their employees. The Piano digital experience cloud measures thousands of customer data points and acquires first-party data to more deeply engage users and then serve relevant content and experiences based on their unique behaviors and profiles. Using this powerful end-to-end platform, Piano's clients have achieved more scale, engagement and revenue by expanding the lifecycle and value of every digital interaction.

Learn more by reaching out to hello@piano.io