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Abstract/Background

Fraudulent activities are prevalent for any e-commerce company (for example, credit card fraud, fraudulent or counterfeit items sold etc.). For Amazon, it's a common problem. 95% of fraud cases are captured by the system automatically, however 5% of the fraud need human investigation. As a result, Amazon employs over 6000 fraud investigators. The 5% that is not captured by the system, translates to millions of cases and only gets larger, as Amazon grows.

Problem at Hand

Investigators need to be trained. The current ILT was costly and the growth and demand for training was getting unrealistic and costly for Amazon, with investigators being based in Seattle, Costa Rica, Germany and India.

The existing ILT training lacked hands-on experience and real-world scenarios to prepare investigators for their job. This was causing a lot of confusion and frustration for new hires as well as seasoned investigators as new types of fraudulent cases were cropping up.

Solution

In order to arrive at a solution, I needed to develop simulated environments that would allow investigators to detect and practice fraud investigations. During analysis, I determined there were certain types of fraud that occurred more frequently than others. I divided the different types of frauds into buckets and designed a way to build the simulations quickly and efficiently. I travelled to India to speak with investigators and manually collect cases. In a period of 10 days, I collected over 25 cases that were deemed to be crucial.

My first prototype, which was developed in less than 1 month, was well received by peers as well as senior management.

Impact

The initial build was sent out to over 6000 investigators and received positive feedback. As a result of the architecture that was proposed and built, Amazon is now using a 3rd party resource to quickly scale and build 100's of simulations. My prototype served as a model for all future builds.