7 consultants on the **coolest** projects they've ever worked on...

slalom

& why they loved them.

Love your work and life

Helping merge two major airlines. Building an app for a retailer's 26 million customers. Using machine learning to accelerate breast cancer research. Dressing up as Spiderman during Spirit Week.

At Slalom, we offer employees variety, fulfillment, and balance. Work with the world's top companies, keep up with the latest technology, flex your skills across industries—and have fun doing it. But don't take our word for it. Take Lisa's, Chad's, Michelle's. Karen's, Katie's, Sandeep's, and Badar's…

slalom

Reimagining customer loyalty

Meet Chad Orwig, senior engineer at Slalom, and see how he helped DSW push beyond the status quo with cloud technology.

"Our goal is to help people with what's new and what's different. You're not going to get stuck doing the same old stuff because our clients don't need help doing the same old stuff."

About the project

Slalom partnered with Google Cloud and DSW Designer Shoe Warehouse to build a flexible, scalable loyalty platform that powers near real-time interaction with 26 million DSW VIP loyalty members.

"Customers told us they wanted more, and they wanted it faster," says Rich Clum, manager of marketing applications for Designer Brands, the company that owns the DSW brand. DSW, Google Cloud, and Slalom collaborated to make optimal use of the Google Cloud product set and navigate the complexities of DSW's historical data

and legacy processes. With a microservices-based architecture running in Google Kubernetes Engine, DSW's new platform is both flexible and highly scalable.

Launching shortly before Black Friday, the platform performed flawlessly through some of DSW's biggest sales days ever. Since launch, DSW's new customer rate is up nine percent, with over 90% of all DSW transactions going through the platform.

what made
it the best

Slalom's Chad Orwig jumped at the opportunity to co-create a greenfield solution that pushed the limits of Google Cloud's extensive capabilities. The project was one of the earliest Kubernetes-based projects for both Google Cloud and Slalom, and also a great use of Big Query. "Greenfield projects are the gold standard for what developers want," says Chad. "You have the opportunity to build something new. You get a better sense of ownership and flexibility on how you do things. You're not tied down by the mistakes of the past."

Building side by side with DSW's team, Chad also enjoyed upskilling the eager young application engineers at

DSW and teaching them Slalom's product engineering methodology. "It was really fun to bring that experience and help guide that development mindset, so they can start to blossom and really create their own opinions."

"One of the great things about Slalom is that our goal is to help people with what's new and what's different. You're not going to get stuck doing the same old stuff because our clients don't need help doing the same old stuff."

Read more about the DSW project and learn how Chad impressed the team with his Java skills on slalom.com.
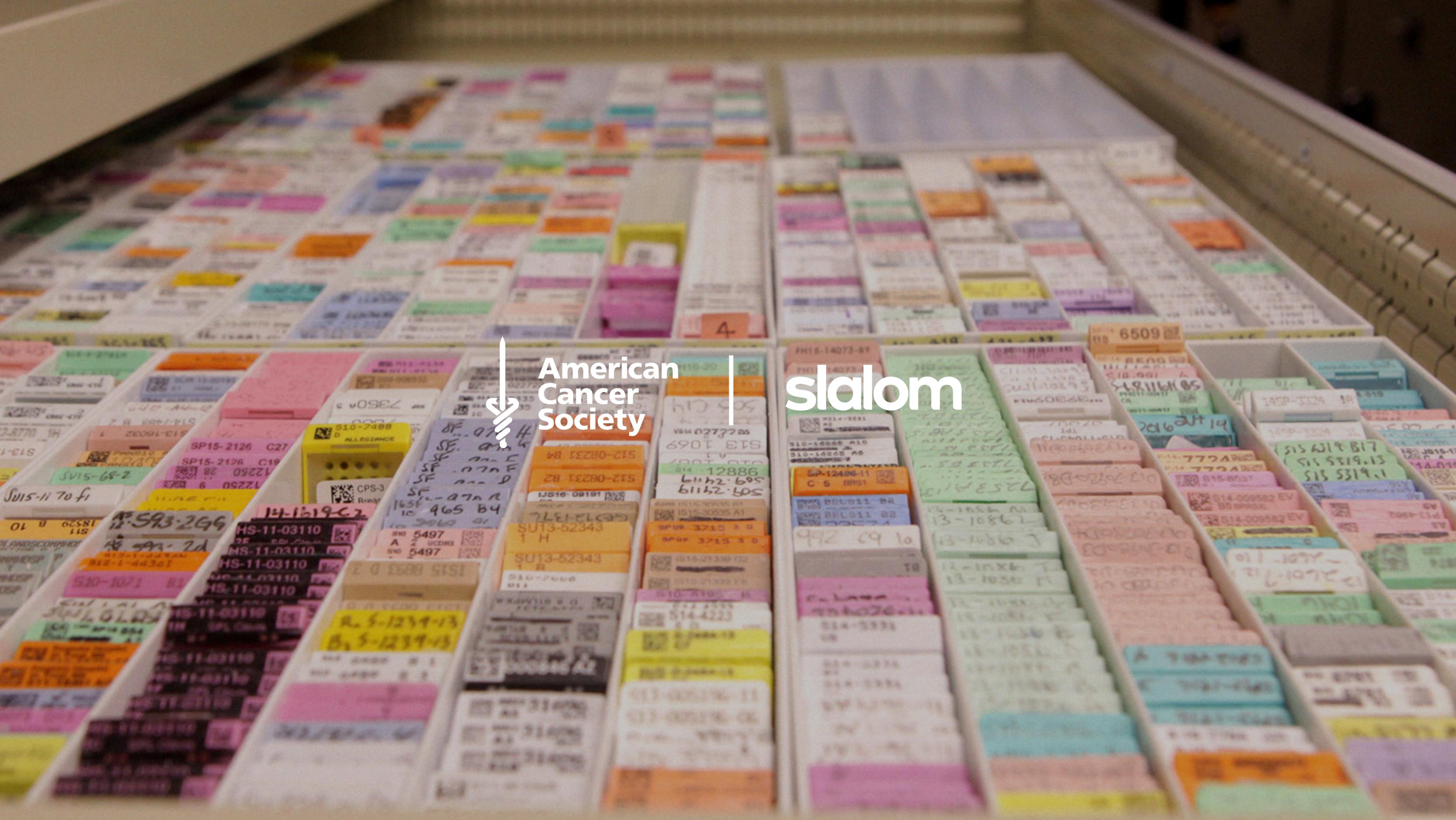
# Finding breast cancer patterns with machine learning

Learn how the work Michelle Yi did with the American Cancer Society is being used to discover insights that could help prevent and treat breast cancer.
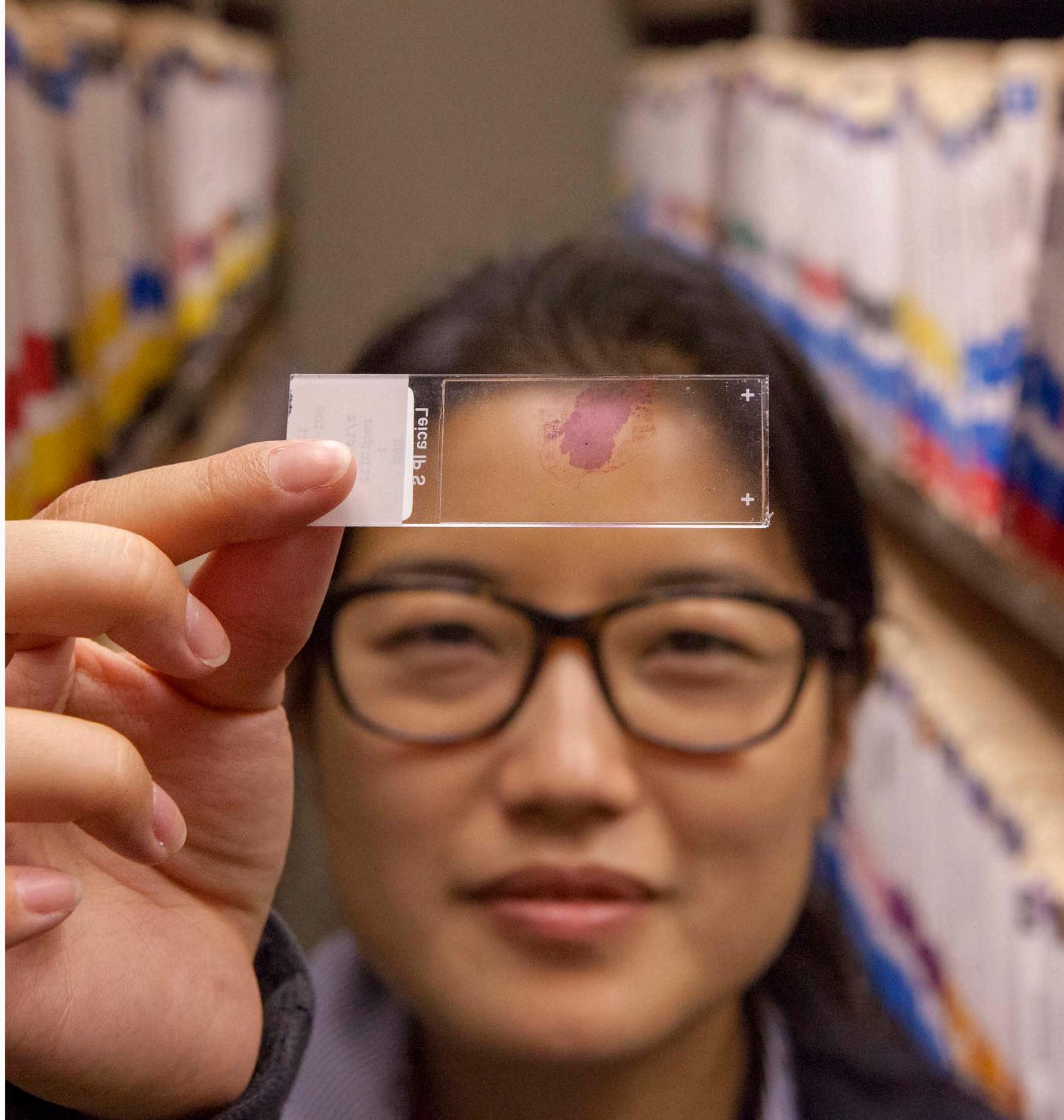
"My mother and grandmother both passed away from breast cancer. Being able to pitch in with the American Cancer Society even a little bit means a lot to me."

About the project

The American Cancer Society (ACS) has collected over 1,700 tumor sample slides from women diagnosed with breast cancer since 1992. The organization knew these slides could provide critical clues to help prevent and treat the disease but identifying patterns in those hundreds of clues was a challenge. So, Slalom partnered with ACS and Google to use machine learning to get to work.

The team converted images of the tissues into a standard format, saved them to Google Cloud, scrubbed inconsistencies that could skew results,

and ran them through unsupervised machine learning analysis. The machine was able to detect new patterns that ACS is now analyzing.

"It could have taken a pathologist three years to do what Slalom helped us do in three months," says Dr. Mia Gaudet, Scientific Director of Epidemiology Research, American Cancer Society. ACS now has powerful machine learning tools that it can reuse on similar projects. In fact, it plans to use machine learning to analyze other types of cancers.

what made it the best

Last year, one of Slalom's consultants passed away from cancer. To honor him, Slalom reached out to ACS to see if, and how, a team of Slalom consultants could help further ACS's mission of freeing the world from cancer. When ACS said it needed help on its breast cancer research team, Michelle Yi, a machine learning guru who lost her own mother and grandmother to breast cancer, stepped in to lead the project.

Michelle is now leading a major initiative across Slalom to do more work that accelerates social good with cutting-edge technology.

Read more about our potentially life-saving work with ACS— and check out Michelle Yi's powerful story on slalom.com.
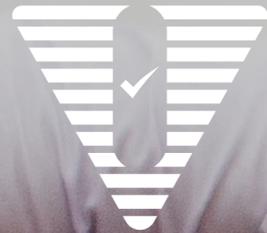
Identifying fake meds

With machine learning, Sandeep Chitta helped the team at Veripad to quickly and accurately flag the substandard—or entirely fake—medical products often found in developing countries.

"Not many places give you the opportunity to work on such an interesting problem with such passionate people," says Sandeep. "It felt great to take Veripad's solution a step up towards a better future."

About the project

The World Health Organization estimates that one in ten medical products in low- and middle-income countries is either substandard or falsified. That means vital medicines—like antibiotics, pain relievers, and anti-malarial drugs—are often worthless and sometimes deadly.

Veripad's founders created a mobile app that "reads" inexpensive chemical test cards, enabling anyone to quickly verify common medicines. Their first-generation app achieved 80% accurate classification of medication type. Veripad partnered with Slalom to improve the technology with machine learning and Amazon SageMaker. This

powerful new platform fast-tracks the process of setting up a machine learning environment and training a solution.

Five weeks later, with the help of Slalom, the new model reported back with 90% confidence. Veripad was empowered to continue making technical improvements to its app and gathering data to continue developing the machine learning model.

"We're on a good path," says Jason Ki, Veripad CTO and co-founder. "Our short time with Slalom laid a foundation for us to continue working. We want to get close to 100% accuracy."

what made it the best

Amazon SageMaker—a platform that fast-tracks the process of setting up a machine learning environment and training a solution—was new to market when this project launched. "People in my market and the analytics community hadn't used it much," says Sandeep Chitta, a solution architect in Slalom's New York market. "I saw the vision, what it could do. I've pretty much been using it constantly ever since. With my current client, we're using it to take machine learning models into production across hundreds of locations."

With Veripad, Sandeep welcomed the opportunity to try out a new platform on a challenging, potentially world-changing problem. "They had a really cool problem, but a limited data set," he explains. "We had to get creative to bypass that. It really had an impact on me when we were able to give them better results with a non-traditional approach."

"In most jobs, I'd probably be sticking to solving one particular problem. Here at Slalom, it's always a different industry, different markets, people with different skill sets and background. It's not just about being technically challenged. The people make it fun."

Read more about Veripad's pioneering work— and how Slalom helped—on <u>slalom.com.</u>

Making dentistry less painful

Find out how Badar Qureshi's team helped Pacific Dental Services inspire a new era of innovation in the dental industry.

"Everybody was in the zone," says Badar Qureshi, practice area lead. "We still talk about this project as a model of what a high-performing team can be."

About the project

Pacific Dental Services (PDS) simplifies the administrative aspects of running a dental practice—including computer systems, phone service, payroll management, health records, and insurance processing—freeing dentists to focus on their patients. PDS started small, with its founder supporting his father's dental office. Today it's a billion-dollar company supporting 670 dental practices in 20 states and adding about 80 more each year.

With such rapid growth, PDS was struggling to scale its technology systems. Slalom's Orange County team worked with PDS to understand the company's IT portfolio and support a hybrid migration to a new data center and the AWS cloud. We also upskilled its IT team and helped its leaders inspire a new era of innovation.

In the end, we helped migrate about 20% of PDS's applications and servers to the AWS cloud. The rest moved to a tier-four data center, with the majority of those scheduled for retirement in a year or two. Today, PDS's fully enabled cloud team is looking two or three years ahead to design high-value solutions for the business.

what made
it the best

"When a client's IT team sees cloud work coming on, it doesn't give them job confidence," says Badar Qureshi, a practice area lead in Slalom's Orange County market. "PDS gave us the freedom to take an Agile approach to their cloud migration, to do it in a very iterative way with lots of feedback and really enable their internal team along the way."

"We were able to challenge ourselves to figure out what our product engineering methodology looks like for a data center migration to the cloud. It was cross-disciplinary—delivery leadership, technology, data and analytics all working together. Everybody was so gifting with their time and knowledge. We were just passing it forward, architect to architect, engineer to engineer."

"The PDS team is a cloud team now," he concludes. "At the end, they threw a party and invited us. It was a really nice celebration. Three years later, they're really proud of what they're doing, and we still get invited to their parties!"

Read more about how Slalom helped PDS build a team of cloud experts on slalom.com.

Going for gold

Discover why Lisa Dowling, principal consultant in Slalom's Seattle office, will never forget how she helped deliver the "gold standard" of airline mergers between Alaska and Virgin America airlines.

"Everybody was super supportive of each other," says Lisa. "It was truly a team—not a bunch of individuals."

About the project

After acquiring Virgin America, Alaska Airlines became the fifth-largest airline in the United States with 33 million passengers a year and 22,000 employees. But bringing two airlines together is no task for the timid. Slalom consultants played pivotal roles on the team responsible for uniting passenger services for the two airlines.

The team—more than 80% women—worked together for 16-months and completed over 10,565 hours of

testing, three mock flights, and 16 practice drills. More than 2,300 employees engaged in over 100,000 hours of training. On the big day, under the watchful eye of the media and the entire airline industry, the team achieved its goal of no negative press and no serious incidents.

As one employee put it, "this will be remembered as a fantastic day for our airline and a gold standard for how to merge two airlines."

what made
it the best

Lisa Dowling joined the integration team after proving herself on a previous ecommerce project with Alaska. She provided a critical connection to the ecommerce team and became "master" of the cutover checklist.

The joy of the project was all about the team. "Everybody was super-supportive of each other," says Lisa. "It was truly a team—not a bunch of individuals." As they plowed through an enormous body of work, the team grew close and stuck to their stated intention to be "the funnest team ever," sharing meals, jokes, and silly toys. They also enjoyed the perks of working for an airline—flying to Palm Springs on several occasions to work by the pool at Sandy Stelling's condo.

In the last high-pressure days, the team diffused the tension by scheduling Spirit Week, with a costume theme for each day. It's hard to stress out when you're dressed in your pajamas or wearing a superhero mask.

Read more about the Alaska Airlines project and how the team built its winning culture on slalom.com.

Bringing a brand to life

Working at the intersection of creative, healthcare, and user experience, Karen MacKay and Katie Chandler helped set a new bar for the AllianceRx Walgreens Prime brand.

"I love to be challenged—as much as possible, as often as possible," says Karen. "It was satisfying to get smart about Agile, and then get our whole team up to speed on it, in a very short amount of time."

About the project

Walgreens and Prime Therapeutics launched their multibillion-dollar joint venture, AllianceRx Walgreens Prime, to deliver convenient and patient-centered care to their customers. Slalom worked with the parent companies to bring the new brand to life—from finance to change management to creative direction.

The Slalom team was led by Karen MacKay, an experienced designer and strategist. Slalom's ability to deliver strong creative in conjunction with a deep understanding of

the business had a big impact. In fact, after the brand's launch, AllianceRx Walgreens Prime invited Slalom to become the lead creative agency for the brand.

"I have extensive experience working with agencies and project managers, and Slalom set a new bar that I'm not sure anyone can ever come close to reaching," says Melissa Pitsoulakis, Director of Brand and Patient Experience at AllianceRx Walgreens Prime.

what made
it the best

"The work itself, the branding, all the production, was super familiar for me," says Slalom experience design lead Karen MacKay. "But trying a new approach to getting so much work done, by running the project in an Agile way, put a totally different twist on it. I love to be learning and challenged—as much as possible, as often as possible. It was satisfying to get smart about Agile, and then get our whole team up to speed on it, in a very short amount of time."

The approach was great for the client, but also for the team, including Katie Chandler, a new consultant who was part of Slalom's analyst program at the time. Slalom is her first job out of college, and this was her first project.

"If I could rearrange all the projects I've been on since, I'd still keep this as my first one," says Katie. "It was the perfect balance of exciting and challenging—different from what I think a lot of my peers are experiencing in their first jobs."

"I learned so much about the design tools and elements," she adds. "The team helped me along, but they didn't make me wait and watch. They really trusted me to take pieces on and own them."

Read more about how the Slalom team "set a new bar" for AllianceRx Walgreens Prime on slalom.com.

Want to see what's available?

slalom.com/careers