

SEPTEMBER 2023
ISSUE NO 1



INSIGHT CONSULTING

Active Intelligence





INSIGHT CONSULTING

Active Intelligence

Sixteen years ago, the seeds of Insight Consulting were planted – a venture born of passion, driven by a simple yet profound purpose: solving problems with data.



Upuli De Abrew

Founders Note

Little did we know that our humble beginning would sprout into the thriving business we proudly stand as today. As we reflect upon this journey, we're reminded of the uncharted paths we've tread, the challenges we've surmounted, and the incredible people who've made it all possible.

Our story began with a shared passion, a genuine love for untangling complexities using the power of data. It was this spark that ignited our entrepreneurial spirit and prompted us to embark on a journey of our own making. With a firm belief in doing what we enjoyed most, we set out to establish a business grounded in values that resonated deep within us: trust, respect, and integrity.

These core values became the cornerstone of our foundation. We believed that by nurturing a culture built on these principles, we would not only create a harmonious environment for ourselves but also attract like-minded individuals who shared our vision. The path we chose wasn't always easy, but it was marked by authenticity and the genuine desire to make a positive impact through our work.

Over the years, we've been exceptionally fortunate to have assembled a team of individuals who share not only our value system but also our passion for deciphering intricate challenges. It's these extraordinary individuals who have been instrumental in shaping our journey, fueling our growth, and transforming Insight Consulting into the vibrant entity it is today. Their experiences, listening skills, and exceptional critical thinking capabilities have been the driving force behind our evolution.



Founders Note



Sean Taylor

As we stand at this juncture, we're humbled by the trajectory our business has taken. Through hard work, dedication, and a sprinkling of good fortune, we've blossomed into a business that spans the entire data value chain. Our focus is centered on forging strong partnerships with our customers, guiding them as they navigate their unique data journeys. We're immensely grateful for the trust our customers have placed in us, and it's a responsibility we take to heart with every engagement.

Our commitment to infusing our interactions with experience and industry insights remains unwavering. We recognize that our role isn't just about providing solutions – it's about being a trusted advisor, a source of guidance, and a beacon for innovation. With each interaction, we aim to not only address current challenges but also to usher in future possibilities.

Today, our offerings encompass a spectrum of capabilities. From custom software development to data pipeline development and integrations, data analytics, planning, consolidation, and industry-specific solutions, we've evolved into a comprehensive data partner for our clients. This evolution is a testament to the enduring values that have shaped us and the passion that continues to drive us forward.

Looking ahead, our growth is a beacon on the horizon, an exciting prospect that motivates us to push boundaries and reach new heights. As we continue on this journey, we're resolute in our commitment to our core values: Respect, Tenacity, Agility, Creating Magic, Future-Fit – values that define who we are and how we approach our work.

In all that we do, the principle of 'Win-Win-Win' guides us. We believe in creating mutually beneficial outcomes for our business, our customers, and our employees. It's a philosophy that underscores our dedication to fostering relationships that stand the test of time.

So, here we stand – proud of the path we've traversed, excited for the journey ahead, and immensely thankful to everyone who's been part of this story. As Insight Consulting continues to evolve, one thing remains certain: our dedication to transforming data into insights, and insights into impact, will forever remain at the heart of everything we do.

Upuli & Sean

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is on the left and the second is on the right, both appearing to be in cursive.

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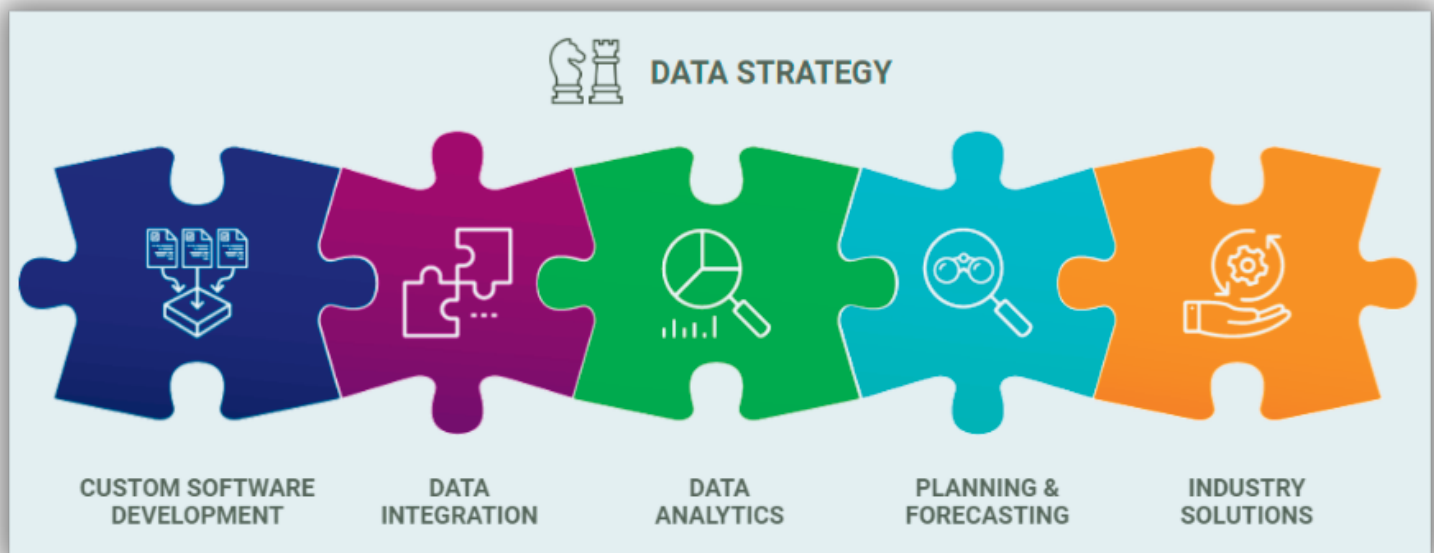
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ABOUT INSIGHT:

Formed in 2007, Insight Consulting is a strategic consulting firm that operates across Southern and East Africa. It is a data specialist that finds its enterprise customers' raw data, frees it from vertical business silos, understands its relevance and actions it into business value for them by using intelligent software and analytical expertise.



PERVASIVE DATA CULTURE HELPS ORGANISATIONS OPTIMISE DATA VALUE CHAIN

AN ARTICLE PUBLISHED BY INSIGHT CONSULTING
23 AUGUST 2023

IN TODAY'S DATA-DRIVEN WORLD, COMPANIES NEED TO TREAT DATA AS A STRATEGIC ASSET.

Insight Consulting has worked with a large number and variety of organizations for more than a decade, and our experience has shown that successful businesses treat data as a strategic asset, underpinned by a strong data culture which grows, mines and closely manages this asset. In the year 2023 and beyond, any business that does not appreciate this is not only missing out on a golden opportunity to leapfrog their competition, but also runs the risk of being left behind, as more forward-looking competitors begin to place greater emphasis on the importance of managing data across the data value chain.

Data integrates into every dimension of a business's operations and its employees, meaning that it is fundamental to corporate thinking and objectives. A strong data culture democratizes data access, calibrates quality decision-making faster, breeds collaboration and fosters data literacy, all the while maintaining the right balance of control, which is fostered through robust data governance.

The challenging task of creating a compelling data culture to manage data as a strategic asset requires a deliberate approach, which needs to take all stakeholders into account and must be driven by a deep understanding of each stakeholder's needs and touch-points in the data value chain.

Understanding that data culture – which includes how data is captured, seen, used and managed – underpins the efficiency of an organisation's data value chain, how should a business go about implementing a data culture with the goal of optimising its data value chain?

Crucial to the successful development of a strong data culture is sponsorship by C-suite executives and support from senior leadership. There must be a top-down approach where it is designed by and for the business users and enabled through data teams and IT. The initiative should be championed by a data council made up of business and IT people, who will be responsible for continuously driving the data culture within the organisation.

The first step to creating a pervasive data culture is to assess a business's current data maturity level. This requires organisations to accurately map out their data inventory and understand their current state in totality. This in turn means describing the current architecture and tools, mapping data inputs, outputs, interfaces and flows and the current level of data and user skills within the organisation and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their current state. The next step is to determine the 'to-be' state – what are the business objectives and how do they see their data architecture supporting this in the ideal world. Among some of the many questions to be asked are: what data is required, where does it reside, what integrations are required, how will the data be used, will it be commercialised or for internal use only, will there be machine learning and AI applications, what skills are required to support the data architecture and what level of upskilling needs to be done with the user community in order to allow them to use the data effectively?



PERVASIVE DATA CULTURE HELPS ORGANISATIONS OPTIMISE DATA VALUE CHAIN

IN TODAY'S DATA-DRIVEN WORLD, COMPANIES NEED TO TREAT DATA AS A STRATEGIC ASSET.

While the temptation is to look to technology at this early stage, businesses first need to conduct a gap analysis between their as-is state and their to-be scenario before considering technology recommendations to close that gap. The gap analysis in effect sets out the requirements for the implementation of the data culture – defining, amongst other things, the desired technology features, data governance procedures, and organisational data literacy initiatives. Once the requirements are defined, the business has a roadmap (data strategy) for their data journey, which will allow them to break down each gap into manageable tasks encompassing technology selection and implementation, data project prioritisations and business and technical upskilling.

Ultimately, implementing a comprehensive and pervasive data culture will allow businesses to stay ahead of their competition, mitigate risk and drive the bottom line through enhanced and accurate decision-making and operational efficiency.

At Insight Consulting, our data professionals have a proven track record collaborating with a multitude of organisations throughout their data journeys as they progress along the data maturity curve. We take pride in our ability to listen to our customers, understand their unique strengths and challenges, and use best practice frameworks to ensure that we deliver collaborative data culture strategies that are best suited to our customers' needs.

Embrace data as your strategic asset. Contact Insight Consulting for more information on how to build a pervasive data culture to support all aspects of your data value chain.





INPHINITY SUITE FOR QLIK SENSE

ABOUT INPHINITY

Inphinity are a Qlik Technology Partner, comprising of a team of data experts and enthusiasts committed to delivering additional functionality and value for Qlik users. Inphinity work in partnership with customers and their global partner network to deliver innovative business intelligence solutions.

INPHINITY SUITE

Inphinity Suite for Qlik Sense offers additional functionality both on premise and in the cloud. Fully secure and enterprise ready Inphinity enables Qlik users to utilise premium writeback/data capture, flow analysis and file analysis all in a governed Qlik environment. The unparalleled capabilities of Inphinity increases Qlik user adoption, creates an Inphinity of supplementary use cases and cultivates a culture of data literacy.

BENEFITS

Chatting, commenting & document upload

Eradicate the need for spreadsheets

Enable better planning

Simple navigation through dashboards



CONTACT INPHINITY WEBSITE

WWW.MYINPHINITY.COM

DEMO PORTAL

WWW.DEMO.MYINPHINITY.COM



INSIGHT CONSULTING

Inphinity Partner

FAIR PRICE

FAIR PRICE USES QLIK TO ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY AND CONTROL – A NO-FUSS APPROACH TO DELIVERING VALUE

CUSTOMER STORY

A COMMITMENT TO FAIR DEALS

Since 1999, Fair Price has been manufacturing stylish and desirable furniture, and marketing it through its own stores at prices that don't overstretch buyers' limited budgets. The company's products are firm favorites among South Africans setting up their first homes and are increasingly appealing to aspiring middle-income professionals working their way up the ladder. Fair Price is a business committed to innovation, service and ensuring a fair deal for customers. Its extensive store network is now complemented by a growing online business, while consumers who struggle to access credit can use its 'lay-by' scheme to reserve an item, pay in instalments and receive it when the final payment is made. It's a philosophy that clearly works. Fair Price now operates 100 stores across the northern regions of South Africa and employs around 1,600 people across the group, including 400 in its manufacturing operation. It's also a business model that depends on competitive pricing without skimping on quality. Delivering this involves effective control and monitoring of critical business areas – from production and inventory to sales, finance and accounting. Information 'at the speed of light' Fair Price realized from an early stage that business information and data analytics were essential to its operation. Its initial forays into the field, however, didn't live up to the company's high expectations.



"We had a very archaic process. Our ERP system is internally developed and highly customized," says Mohammed Hansa, Support Services General Manager at Fair Price. "We tried to develop algorithms to forecast sales based on previous results but the numbers were hit and miss in terms of accuracy. This led to inefficiencies in areas like warehousing and logistics. Basics like having stock in the wrong places meant we were unable to service customers as well as we should." Also causing issues was the spread of data sources across Fair Price's operation and how to accumulate and present it to those who need it most. Fair Price's first BI tool was powerful enough when first acquired but, as the business grew, so did its demands and expectations – a situation that was further complicated by the arrival of Covid-19. "Users had started to become dependent on the analytics but our front end was based on spreadsheets and it was becoming problematic," Hansa explains. "The problem was getting the data quickly enough and in a format that we could analyze fast enough to make meaningful decisions. During Covid, for example, we needed information at the speed of light; it was a matter of survival for the business."



"If you don't reveal some insights soon, I'm going to be forced to slice, dice, and drill!"



"When I asked for a breakdown of the numbers, this is NOT what I meant!"

"Good morning! What opinion can I help you justify today?"



FAIR PRICE

“QLIK IS RESULTING IN SOMETHING ACTIONABLE AND ALLOWING PEOPLE TO WORK SMARTER AND BETTER.”

No frills, no fuss, proper value

Hansa was referred to South African data strategy specialist Insight Consulting – and to Shanna Jardim, Senior Business Intelligence Consultant, in particular. He was immediately impressed. “Working with a consultant who understood how the business works made life much easier,” says Hansa. “With us it is no frills, no fuss and selling goods at a proper value. Shanna understood that, which allowed us to move forward very quickly.” Jardim saw that Qlik could provide the solution that Fair Price was looking for: a scenario-planning tool capable of pulling data from multiple sources, including in-house data warehouse and SQL developers, as well as servers at warehouses, factories, head office and individual stores. Qlik would also meet Fair Price’s need for governance and security, while using the data acquired to power a user-friendly platform that would inform key decision-making processes. Jardim worked with Hansa to build the development, ensure data cleanliness and complete an effective working platform in just a few months. “The visualizations and what they could achieve were very important,” Hansa notes. “Having experienced other tools, I saw immediately how much easier the processes were with Qlik. It was exactly what we required.” With Qlik in place, Hansa set about applying it to some live use cases. It didn’t take long before he scored an important early win.

STEPPING UP TRANSPARENCY

One of Fair Price’s main initiatives involves hiring delivery drivers from rural communities to deliver its products. It’s a popular scheme that the business wanted to maintain but poor margins threatened its viability. “I ran it through Qlik to find out whether raising the delivery charge by R20 ZAR (just over \$1 USD) would impact customer behavior,” Hansa recalls.

“The results were surprising. Customers saw the increase as largely immaterial but it turned the delivery program from a major loss to a decent profit.” It was a great start to Fair Price’s Qlik journey and led Hansa and Jardim to identify other areas of the business where improvements could be made. Before long, Qlik was providing a range of critical viewpoints across the business. Qlik dashboards were introduced into factories and warehouses to show the numbers of products built and in progress, accompanied by a similar deployment on sales floors. “We introduced Qlik into every single store to launch a basic sales incentive model for staff,” Hansa explains. “Users can see dashboards showing what they’ve sold and what they’re being paid on. It’s very transparent and a major step up from the old system.”

WORKING SMARTER & BETTER

Qlik’s influence has also spread to Fair Price’s finance department, where it is transforming productivity. Laborious tasks such as payment reconciliations, which could involve multiple staff members and time-consuming manual processes, are now significantly simplified and accelerated. “That’s the level we’ve taken Qlik to,” says Hansa. “It’s not just for operational reports to tell the head of procurement what we’re selling and whether it’s profitable. We’re using it in our back-end office. Qlik is resulting in something actionable and allowing people to work smarter and better.”

Enhancing both Qlik and Fair Price’s capabilities are additional features enabled by Qlik’s open API environment. Write-back extension Komment, for example, is being used to add extra depth and breadth to Fair Price’s deployment, while Hansa is also excited by the potential to add artificial intelligence to the mix.

“There are all these different tools that we can leverage with Qlik,” Hansa notes.



STRONG DATA CULTURE HELPS ORGANISATIONS OPTIMISE THEIR VALUE CHAIN

Successful businesses treat data as a strategic asset, underpinned by a strong data culture that grows, mines and closely manages this asset.

By Insight Consulting
23 August 2023

In today's data-driven world, organisations need to treat data as a strategic asset. Insight Consulting has worked with a large variety of organisations for more than a decade, and our experience has shown that successful businesses treat data as a strategic asset, underpinned by a strong data culture that grows, mines and closely manages this asset. In 2023 and beyond, any business that does not appreciate this is not only missing out on a golden opportunity to leapfrog their competition but also runs the risk of being left behind, as more forward-looking competitors begin to place greater emphasis on the importance of managing data across the data value chain.

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Pervasive data culture

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MERIDIAN

SA CONSULTANCY REBOOTS MULTINATIONAL CONTRIBUTOR TO FOOD SECURITY IN AFRICA

South Africa's analytical data strategy and business intelligence consultancy, Insight Consulting, is being credited with unleashing operational efficiency at Mauritius headquartered The Meridian Group. The group is the holding company of 23 subsidiaries across Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe and a meaningful contributor to the agricultural sector in the region.

Insight Consulting was tasked by The Meridian Group to interrogate its reporting, budgeting and operational planning process across its entire business. The task at hand was finding a solution that creates an orchestrated harmony between the many moving parts across the various subsidiaries. This was to be achieved with due consideration for the regulations that governed the way business was conducted in each of the countries they operate in and to source and implement a technology-based solution that integrated strategic operational and budgetary planning across the group.

Meridian's subsidiaries – each made up of four units: fertiliser blending, fertiliser distribution, retail and production of commodities – caters for all farmers; from small holding to commercial enterprises, NGOs and government growing programs. With this knowledge and an understanding of the crucial role that the group played in Africa's food security, Insight Consulting set out to fundamentally shift a formerly disparate reporting and budgeting process into a consolidated and streamlined business strength.

“End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

UN, Sustainable Development Goal 2 – Zero Hunger



The consulting firm worked closely with the business to formulate and deliver on data strategies at all levels of the organisation. It embarked on a long-term relationship with its client to unlock actionable insights, using the latest thinking and technology across the data value chain.

This approach resulted in the customised implementation of Corporate Planning (CP) software that assists Meridian to overcome the time-consuming, manual burden of the planning process as well as the challenges associated with inconsistent reporting during their planning and forecasting cycles. Meridian is now able to integrate strategic and operational planning to facilitate transparent and well-founded business decisions across the group.



MERIDIAN

SA CONSULTANCY REBOOTS MULTINATIONAL CONTRIBUTOR TO FOOD SECURITY IN AFRICA

Graeme Vaughan, Chief Information Officer at The Meridian Group says, “Over the years, our organisation – and probably many others with operations as diverse as ours – had been running a set of highly complicated consolidated budgets on an annual basis. This is a mammoth task and there wasn’t much scope for in-depth scenario planning, or at least at the level that an organisation needs to be agile and proactive.”

Vaughan says that the benefits of having a shared tool outweigh the time and effort of getting various subsidiaries and users on board. One of the most pleasing outcomes of the implementation, says Vaughan, was the development of a unified culture of corporate excellence, across units and regions.

Reflecting on the partners that walked this transformation journey with his internal team, Vaughan says, “Relationships are key for me in this role because I’m not a technocrat. You need to be able to work with a business partner and have trust that your partner will help you assimilate tools that will make a meaningful impact in the business. You must have faith that the technology your partner is presenting is not just to make money but a real, meaningful solution to a problem that has been identified in the business, with a plan to solve that problem in the least amount of time and with the least disruptions.”

Technology is a key growth driver for our business. It supports our ultimate goal of improving food security in Africa.

Graeme Vaughan, Chief Information Officer at The Meridian Group



Vaughan adds that Insight Consulting and The Meridian Group did not follow the typical steps one would find in a consulting relationship, and that it was organic and evolved on a weekly basis out of necessity.

Shanna Jardim at Insight Consulting agrees, saying that any relationship a partner enters into with a business needs to align on the challenges, the company’s policies and their current processes, and then the team must work together closely and methodically to find the right solutions.

“We were able to drill down into the data and find where the misalignment was and then apply the Corporate Planning software suite alongside the business intelligence software to solve real budgeting and planning challenges. This ongoing relationship and our close eye over the data has enabled us to pick up problems, and then take them to Meridian with the right solutions to solve them.”

“As a proud South African consultancy, it’s been a privilege collaborating with a business that has attached itself to a higher purpose and has great aspirations for our continent,” says Jardim.



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INSIGHT BOT

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Realtime Engagement

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Customisable and Highly Scalable



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INQBATE

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE INTERNSHIP

Insight Consulting invited recent graduates aspiring to build a career in business intelligence and data analytics to apply to participate in its InQBate internship program. Participants were provided with training as well as practical work experience to develop data and analytical solutions using the various tools in the Qlik product stack.



The program duration was 6 months, starting on 15 September 2022 and ending on 28 February 2023.



INQUBATE



INTERNSHIP



3-months theoretical training: Data Literacy / Qlik Sense Visualisations / Qlik Sense Data Modelling and Scripting / Other Qlik-related technologies



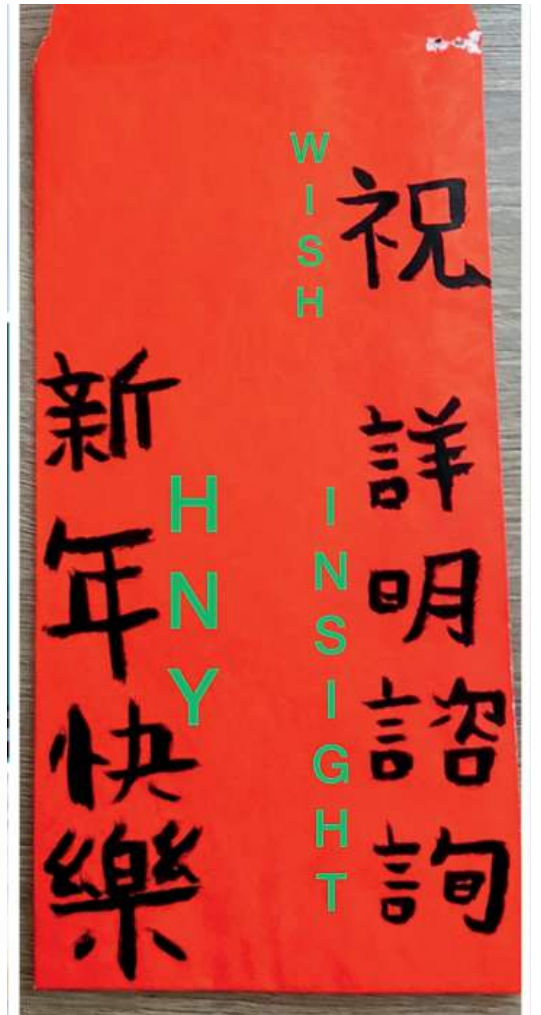
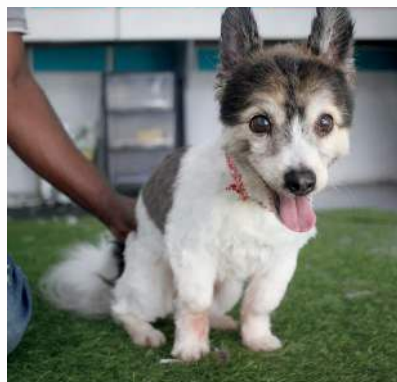
3-months practical training working in a team and with senior consultants on various business intelligence projects at different client organizations



On completion of the program, successful candidates were offered a full-time position within the company.

CREATING MAGIC

Insight Consulting makes value happen for our customers, partners, employees & communities



From left to right

1. Mandarin lessons | 2. Minute to Win it | 3. Happy 16th Birthday Insight Consulting! | 4. Year-end staff conference
5. Hint Hunt Team Building | 6. & 7. Staff conference December 2022
8. Sanitary Towel Collection | 9. Happy Chinese New Year Insight! | 10. Insight staff pets



INSIGHT CONSULTING
Active Intelligence



STAFF CONFERENCES



HIRSCH'S

DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING GIVES RETAILERS INSIDE LANE IN RACE TO BLACK FRIDAY

Customer story

South Africa's retail sector experienced an important shift when the Black Friday tradition entered the local landscape, most notably the introduction of a large spike in trading volume during the month of November, peaking around the day itself, says special projects manager for Hirsch's, Craig Smith. He says understanding business data is crucial for retailers to prepare for spikes like Black Friday and the festive season, as well as dips during quieter times of the year.

"A few years ago, everything built up to the festive season, but since the introduction of Black Friday, November is a crazy time of the year. While December volumes are still good, November has surged in importance for retailers and it is crucial that they are sufficiently prepared," says Smith.

He says that October is generally flatter as consumers hold back their spend in anticipation of November specials, making it increasingly important to strike the balance between product lines expected to fly off the shelves, compared to slower movers that may well see a short-term or seasonal spike. "All categories will spike during November," says Smith, "and in some cases there may also be seasonal increases over and beyond the Black Friday surge. Beyond effective analytics, great relationships with suppliers makes a big difference because a cracker of a deal from a supplier means we can pass that on to customers."

Zoning in on data, Smith says every decision is made from what he calls actionable insights that are reported to key business personnel. "Hirsch's, despite growing to the levels it has, has its DNA firmly in the traditions of a family business. In the old days, a buyer would walk onto the floor and make decisions on stock levels and what to order based on gut feel, precisely because of how well he or she knew the industry and the customers. This core competency hasn't changed in our business – we know our customers very well, and as we have grown, we have maintained this ability by analysing the data in the business to ensure that the customers find what they need.

"In the new world, where online retail has turbocharged sales so that some lines move very quickly while others may be slow and steady, data-driven decisions are vital to strike the right balance. We use Qlik Sense, which generates very important actionable insights for the decision-makers centrally, and at branch level. When planning for something like Black Friday, this level of confidence is crucial," he says.

Smith says that leveraging data has supported sales staff and the customer experience. "Data is hugely important to us – now as we approach Black Friday, but also every other week of the year. Our sales people can see stock levels nationally in real time, as stock moves. This lives on an application on their phones, meaning they can answer any questions or sell from anywhere to anywhere. Customers, on the other hand, see actual live product availability," he says.

Smith says that Hirsch's has 40 years of customer data, some of which is old and not usable, but a lot of which holds very important insights that could unlock immense agility and competitiveness for the business, and which could certainly make for even more impressive Black Friday performance in years to come. This is why he sought out Qlik and a data services partner to help get the best out of the platform.



"When you two have finished arguing your opinions, I actually have data!"



HIRSCH'S

DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING GIVES RETAILERS INSIDE LANE IN RACE TO BLACK FRIDAY

Customer story continued

“We know our customers well, but there is an opportunity to target more people in a smarter manner. It is going to be game changing once we get actionable insights on all our data from different business units through the use of Qlik,” says Smith. He adds that Hirsch’s uses a legacy system – albeit a very effective one – and that by plugging Qlik into the system, his team is now able to extract useful insights and automate reports, which removes the risk of users making mistakes in drawing reports. He says that scaling this capability throughout the business is the exciting next step, including other functionality such as forecasting or bots to deliver reporting.

While online retail is the driving force behind increased sales in the business, especially during November, Smith says it would be a mistake to downplay the importance of physical stores. “Yes, online retail is bringing more eyes onto the product lines and driving sales – especially during November – but people still want the in-store experience, especially from a business like Hirsch’s that prides itself on personal customer service. People still want to touch and feel what they are buying. It is becoming increasingly important to analyse data and make informed decisions with this holistic mindset,” he says.

www.hirschs.co.za



“AT FIRST I WANTED TO DO THIS ON MY OWN, BUT **BRINGING INSIGHT CONSULTING ON BOARD TO INTEGRATE QLIK SENSE INTO THE BUSINESS WAS THE BEST DECISION WE COULD HAVE MADE. HAVING PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD ON BOARD HAS GIVEN US A SOLID BASE FROM WHICH TO WORK.**”

Craig Smith, Hirsh's



QLIKWORLD 2023

LAS VEGAS

Insight Consulting team members recently attended QlikWorld 2023 in Las Vegas.

QlikWorld is a global annual conference dedicated to the latest advancements of data integration and analytics, featuring keynote presentations, interactive sessions with thought leaders and subject matter experts, and product demonstrations.

It was a new, immersive event filled with learnings and peer-to-peer connections



Day 1 of QlikWorld 2023.

Registration done and dusted. Now on to the learnings.



QlikWorld 2023 - Insightful, connected, forward-looking and fun!

We are making new friends, meeting up with old ones, feeling the thrill of knowing we are a part of a brilliant and passionate community.

GALITO'S

BY PARTNERING WITH DATA SPECIALISTS INSIGHT CONSULTING TO UNLEASH THE POWER OF QLIK, GALITOS FLAME-GRILLED ITS LEGACY REPORTING AND TURNED ITS DATA INTO A STRATEGIC BUSINESS ASSET

Customer story

Successful South African flame-grilled chicken brand Galitos, a business with more than 240 stores in 17 countries, set out on a journey with strategic data specialist consulting firm Insight Consulting to optimise its data value chain. The result is that only four months in, Galitos has saved time and money, and makes accurate decisions and forecasts using reliable and real-time business data.

Qlik is an intuitive end-to-end business intelligence solution. Unlike traditional business intelligence which tends to be passive, Qlik's visualisation and reporting drives a real-time approach of continuous intelligence. It bridges the gap between data and realising value from the data. As a specialist data partner that works with businesses to optimise their data value chain, Insight Consulting is an African Qlik partner of choice.



Galito's
FLAME-GRILLED CHICKEN

The Legacy Problem

Samuel Diedericks, Head of Finance at Galito's Restaurant Group, says that a business like Galito's generates huge amounts of data. "With more than 600,000 transactions a month in close to 170 stores in South Africa alone, you can imagine the amount of data."

Diedericks says that Galito's appreciated that its business depended on data, because every one of the 600,000 transactions had within them product, price, raw materials and much more. "We simply cannot know what is selling, what is working, what isn't working, what trends are occurring if we cannot read the data." The result, he says, were excel spreadsheets with millions of lines of unstructured data. "We knew the data held immense value and so we built reports that, frankly, Excel could not manage." Sharing massive spreadsheets via email was time-consuming and inefficient, and business users were never seeing live data, but rather a snapshot in time.

Beyond this, says Diedericks, the more users interacted with the spreadsheets, the higher the chance they would break the reports, necessitating smaller reports to be converted into view-only PDF mode. The time-intensive inefficient reporting needed to change.

The Intervention

Having already tried other solutions before that did not live up to expectations, with complex dashboards and no partner to guide the business, it was recommended to Galito's that they engage Insight Consulting with a view of implementing Qlik.

"Insight Consulting is not like any partner we have engaged. They come into your business and engage deeply and ask the right questions. They make an effort to understand exactly where our data sits and what the challenges are, and then build solutions to real problems. Perhaps the most rewarding part of our engagement is that Insight Consulting not only provided the solutions we asked for, but offered solutions we had not even thought about and which have had a marked impact on the business," says Diedericks.



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The Outcome

After phase one and two, which took only four months, Galito's can understand in real time exactly what they are selling, where they are selling, the times they are selling it, and more. It can pick up trends and make informed projections that Diedericks says is within a margin of 5% of actual performance. It can manage procurement and suppliers far more accurately, and dispatch stock dynamically based on performance and projections. He says in the next few phases the business will bring its international stores into the solution and radically transform its planning around new store builds and franchise locations. "If you appreciate that chicken has a finite life before it can no longer be used, if stock sits too long it must be destroyed at a very high cost. The opposite is also true, no stock is catastrophic for a food outlet," says Diedericks, who adds that the projections have helped the business pre-empt and prepare for trends in buying behaviour and disruptions such as load shedding.

She says that it is not just finance that benefits from the solution. Distribution is now able to far more efficiently and effectively plan live distribution routes using business data and location data, as well as plan how much stock to dispatch to where, and whether to make use of smaller or larger trucks. Marketing can make accurate forecasts on spend versus return by analysing the live location of all billboards in relation to the location of all the stores, and read against sales performance. In other words, they can see how the billboards in certain locations are influencing buying behaviour at stores and make informed decisions.

He explains that Galito's has a growth strategy that entails new stores, and so the solution will positively benefit projects by analysing store location, such as forecourt, street front and malls, store size and sales, as well as the most optimal geographic location to ensure best performance for new franchises.

"The most noticeable benefit has been the immense time savings. We have gone from spending a large amount of our time cleaning data and building reports, to spending our time analysing the reports to make good decisions. Another massive benefit has been the real-time nature of the analytics and the ability to show Exco and shareholders a live view of the business. The intelligence built into the solution allows us to pick up trends quickly and make accurate forecasts in sales and stock demands, among much more. Insight Consulting built mechanisms to ensure the data collected, from whichever source, is clean and accurate and so we know we can trust the insights." Diedericks explains that in a country such as South Africa, where there is load shedding or other disruptions, internet connectivity is a challenge. However Insight Consulting built an on-site solution that enables the data to continue flowing, which is automatically over-ridden once the internet connection returns.

The Value of the partnership

Other companies have worked with us before and brought different solutions but weren't able to show any value. In three years they were unable to unlock the value that Insight Consulting has in just four months. Insight Consulting is different, they have made the effort to come and see us, get to know us, and learn about our business and challenges," says Diedericks.

Insight Consulting is passionate about data and solving problems, and so part of its methodology is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the as-is situation, as well as a business's data maturity. It then builds a plan to get the business from where it is to where it needs to be, optimising every aspect of the data value chain.

"One cannot underestimate the value of a partner that is invested in you and your business. We are talking about real contact, real relationships. When you combine this with specialists who understand how to use the technology to extract the most value from your data, you get real business value. This is exactly what Insight Consulting is doing and the results speak for themselves. It must also be said that the investment is very good value and worth every cent."

Insight Consulting Director Upuli De Abrew says that **the most successful businesses treat their data as a strategic asset**. "At Insight Consulting we work with many different organisations across various sectors, and over the years we have come to realise that successful businesses treat data as a strategic business asset. This means they have a **strong data culture** and optimise their data value chain. It is a great honour to partner with Galito's on their digital journey, and we look forward to **unlocking even more value in their data value chain.**"



Corporate Planning

ABOUT



CORPORATE PLANNING SERVICES



Business planning across all areas of a business is unquestionably a crucial success factor to all organisations. Whether creating financial budgets, resourcing budgets, or operational plans of any nature, the importance of creating and working towards an integrated plan is a non-negotiable in today's business world, and critical in ensuring the sustainability of a business.

Insight Consulting's Planalyze division offers an integrated Corporate Planning solution, ensuring that companies of all sizes can set financial goals, distribute these goals across the business, and ensure that operational plans are put in place to support the achievement of those goals. Financial and related operational performance can be managed from the same toolset, ensuring that all organisational functions are working towards the same set of goals and targets.

By simplifying and streamlining budgeting and forecasting processes and cashflow planning at all levels of the organisation, with the ability to work top-down or bottom-up, Corporate Planning ensures true integration, with the ability to immediately see the results of changes to operational plans on financial results, and vice versa.

CORPORATE PLANNING SOLUTIONS

Our corporate performance management solution, Corporate Planning (CP) assists businesses to overcome the time-consuming, manual burden of the planning process and the challenges associated with inconsistent reporting during their planning and forecasting cycles. With the implementation of the CP-Suite, businesses are able to integrate strategic and operational planning to facilitate transparent and well-founded business decisions based on the data.

CP has industry solutions for Housing & Real Estate, Healthcare, Transport and Logistics, Services, Automobile, Retail and Manufacturing.

Our Financial Planning Solution comes with a wide range of business planning features, a large number of analysis functions and a complete reporting system. With this finance solution, all the areas of financial management (balance sheet, P&L, cash flow statement) can be depicted for multi companies in multi currencies. Many users may work on the same version at the same time.

Our consultants are experienced individuals with broad business administration expertise from many projects across multiple industries. We partner and support each company in the implementation of their unique solution and advise on the optimal use case.

AFRIMAT

EXPLAINED: HOW FINANCE PROFESSIONALS CAN BECOME BUSINESS PARTNERS



Afrimat CFO Pieter de Wit says finance professionals must embrace technology to free up their time.

I recently participated in a podcast, and one of the first questions I was asked was: “Finance is not just the rating and reporting of history. It’s a future-focused job. How do you look ahead rather than backwards, and work alongside the business as a partner?”

My answer was this:

“We are no longer a bunch of accountants hidden in a back room somewhere, recording transactions and reporting historical financial figures. We are a strategic business partner, fully involved in setting the direction of the organisation.”

But how do we practically achieve this? This spurred me into writing this piece to share my thoughts on this complex issue.

As background, before I was appointed CFO of Afrimat, I took on an operational role, heading up the group’s KZN and Free State businesses. Only then did I fully realise the importance of having a financial background or the support of a good financial manager – pretty much every decision you make has a financial implication.

It is at this level that finance can play a vital role and influence the business as a strategic advisor – by helping senior executives understand the cost implications of their choices, you help them to make informed decisions.

Another essential component of being a trusted business advisor is that the finance function must cover a broad range of management information – it can no longer simply be responsible for the income statement and balance sheet. The drivers behind any material income and expense item should also be fully understood.

Here’s a good example: it was of very little value to our business to report an increase in fuel expenses year-on-year without supplying information in respect of what caused the increase, namely primarily the fuel price and consumption. Whilst it’s fairly easy to provide management information on the fuel price increase, consumption is altogether more complex.

Appropriate systems and controls are now in place to ensure we manage both how fuel is delivered as well as how it’s dispatched. The fuel consumption for each vehicle is also monitored to manage overall fuel consumption effectively. It’s this level of detail and the collection of appropriate data that’s critical to understand in respect of every single material income or expense we have. To be a trusted advisor to the business, a successful CFO or FD must also understand the risks, the markets, and the regulatory frameworks, as well as the different alternatives facing the business. You can’t afford to operate purely within the finance role. You must be commercially and strategically minded.

A fine example is that you can’t merely report a decrease or increase in revenue year-on-year or against budget without understanding the commercial aspects of the product or service being sold, as well as the business’ strategic positioning.

Can you answer the questions as to why customers buy the product or service, what the competitive advantage of the product or service is, and what the alternatives or substitutes available to the customer are? Also, are there any pricing or additional volume opportunities to increase revenue? What is the likelihood of and impact on the business of losing any particular customer? Which industry does your customer operate in and what is the current economic environment facing that industry?

Third, finance must embrace technological innovations, such as robotics processing, AI, data analytics and predictive tools. Technological innovation has made it possible for us to be more involved in setting the strategic direction of the business, because a lot of transactional work, previously performed by the function, can now be done automatically, freeing up time to focus on what are, in my opinion, more critical elements than solely capturing the numbers.

However, a word of caution here – you can easily get caught-up in the technological changes and trying to understand which will add value to the business or which will end up incurring cost without necessarily adding value. This is something you need to work through. The use of technology and the role that finance plays within any organisation will also change in relation to the growth and maturity of the business.

AFRIMAT

CONTINUED: HOW FINANCE PROFESSIONALS CAN BECOME BUSINESS PARTNERS



Afrimat CFO Pieter de Wit says finance professionals must embrace technology to free up their time.

When Afrimat listed 12 years ago we did not have a single ERP system but relied instead on various small accounting packages, and it would have been difficult to implement data analytics at that stage. After we implemented a single ERP system, we added a business intelligence tool, QlikView.

Afrimat has grown so much over these past 12 years through acquisitions and greenfield projects and is a lot more complex, but now we have a system in place that can effectively deal with the complexity and growth and provide us with valuable data. Make the right decisions for your business at the right time, and in my opinion, you won't regret it.

Finally, to remain relevant in a changing environment finance can't just be a "cost centre" – it must add value to the business. The simple truth here is that to add value you must understand the business to identify opportunities to add value.

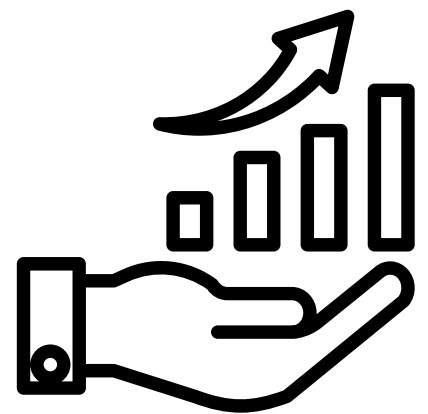
Another example: Afrimat had several insurance brokers and policies in the past and so didn't fully benefit from economies of scale. Finance identified this as a problem, and we have since merged brokers and policies, which not only reduced our risks, but resulted in a substantial cost-saving.

The days where a finance professional only needed accounting, financial and analytical skills have long gone. One needs softer skills too. As a CFO or FD, you must have leadership skills – your team won't respect you if you expect them to stick to deadlines while you don't. You also need to realise that you need a team to succeed; one person can never do all the work. It is therefore imperative that you have good communication and people skills to foster team relationships.

You also need to cultivate a positive culture through teamwork, integrity, trust and respect for one another. A positive culture will result in an engaged working environment and so give rise to innovation. Everyone should be comfortable enough to challenge the process. By challenging the process, the team can identify more efficient ways of performing their tasks.



**I'll do algebra,
I'll do trig, and
I'll even do
statistics, but
graphing is
where I draw the
line!**



Make the right decisions for your business at the right time.



HOROSCOPE



Leo

(July 23 - August 22):



You're the data royalty this week, Leo. Your charisma and presentation skills will shine as you present your findings to the team. Just make sure you have some dazzling charts to match your personality.



Virgo

(August 23 - September 22):

Virgo, your attention to detail is unmatched. But don't get lost in the weeds of your data. Take breaks, step back, and remember that sometimes a simple bar chart can convey the message just fine.

Libra

(September 23 - October 22):



Balance is your keyword this week, Libra. You'll juggle multiple data sources and stakeholders. Just like a well-constructed dashboard, keep it clean, organized, and visually appealing to maintain harmony.

Scorpio

(October 23 - November 21):



Scorpio, your passion for data is so intense that even your data points are blushing. Just remember to keep your data relationships professional, and don't let outliers get under your skin.

Aries

(March 21 - April 19)



You're feeling like a data detective this week, Aries. Your keen analytical skills will help you uncover hidden trends and insights. Help will come from an unlikely source towards the end of this week.

Taurus

(April 20 - May 20)



Taurus, your determination to organize your data is commendable, but remember that even analytics need some space to breathe. Try not to schedule too many meetings; you'll need time to prepare a compelling data story.

Gemini

(May 21 - June 20):



It's a split-screen kind of week for you, Gemini. You'll find yourself multitasking between datasets and charts. Just be careful not to merge your coffee with your keyboard; it won't make a good dataset.

Cancer

(June 21 - July 22):



Your intuition is your secret data weapon this week, Cancer. Trust your gut when making data-driven decisions, but also remember to back it up with evidence. The stars say you're on the right track.

Sagittarius

(November 22 - December 21):



Sagittarius, your curiosity knows no bounds, and you're always chasing the latest data trend. But don't be surprised if your pursuit of data enlightenment leads you down a rabbit hole of cat videos.

Capricorn

(December 22 - January 19):



You're the data-driven strategist this week, Capricorn. Your practical approach will lead to smart decisions. Just don't forget to factor in some wild variables because life, like data, can be unpredictable.

Aquarius

(January 20 - February 18):



Aquarius, your innovative thinking leads to a breakthrough in data analysis. You'll introduce a new data visualization technique involving interpretive dance. It's so avant-garde.

Pisces

(February 19 - March 20):



Your imagination is your superpower this week, Pisces. You'll visualize data in ways no one else can, turning dull numbers into works of art. Just be sure your scatter plot doesn't turn into actual confetti at the office party!





INSIGHT CONSULTING

Active Intelligence

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Active Intelligence

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