



How your business could benefit from an analytics consultant

Description

An analytics consultant can help smooth the implementation of data analytics projects for you. In a [recent post](#), we wrote about how data analytics can help you grow your business. We also touched on the complexities that have led to slow adoption, particularly among small businesses. At [Mut-Con](#), we built our business to help clients use their data to achieve growth and industry leadership.

Because we are very firm believers in brands clearly defining their [value proposition](#), we decided to think deeply about what this means for our clients. This post shares the findings of that thought process. So if you are contemplating an analytics consultant, these are some of the benefits you can reap from a good one.

Get Insights from Data

Analytics brings out trends in data. This is the movement in the metrics that measure whatever is being observed. The end goal of an analytics project, however, is not observing movements in metrics, this is the means.

Good analytics projects should implement critical thinking to turn trends into insights. Analytics alone will tell you what happened, adding critical thinking should tell you why and how. It should also tell you how it can be avoided (for threats) or how it can be improved (for opportunities).

This is the basic definition of insights, the desired outcome of analytics projects. A good analytics consultant should have a method for converting expected trends into insights. They should be able to draw from experience to suggest factors worth considering when applying critical thinking.

Analytics consultants stay ahead of business trends to help you consider factors across:

- The global economy
- Your regional economy

- Industry/ sector of the economy
- Your product-specific niche

Most importantly, your analytics consultant should be able to help you reconcile your knowledge with the trends in the data for the most relevant insights.

Measure the Right KPIs and Determine the Right KPAs

Our [post](#) on implementing data analytics for growth touched on [Key Performance Areas](#) and [Key Performance Indicators](#). Insights should be based on these for them to generate real value for the business.

The challenge for most businesses is they tend to measure too many KPIs because they do not fully understand the KPAs for the goal being pursued. The result is it takes too long to get to insights and they have lost value by the time of application.

Real insights come from critical thinking, and more KPIs equal more time to insights.

An analytics consultant should help you understand what areas of your business are critical to achieving your goals (KPAs). Ideally, each analytics project should concentrate on one KPA at a time. From your KPA, you can draw up a list of KPIs, values that show the performance of your KPA.

Your analytics consultant should help you break these down to the most critical, ideally three. From here on, your project should prioritise these. Every aspect of your analytics should help end users fully understand the impact of their efforts on KPIs, so they can get and apply the right insights.

Understand the Right Data Sources

[Big data](#) is so-called because of the massive amounts of data we are producing today. No business is an exception, even your own. Modern data sources are so wide, varied and massive, it's understandable to not understand the value of your data.

Your analytics consultant should be able to help you conduct a proper audit of the data sources needed for your project. Before collecting additional data, he should help you understand data already coming in and how it can be used in your project.

It's likely that additional data will be needed though. An additional quality of modern data is its complexity. An analytics consultant should have the expertise to clean data and make it applicable to the analytics project being implemented.

Most important, however, is helping you avoid biases in data selection. If you search for data to prove a preconception you will always find it. The fear of failure that exists in us all may push us to subconsciously favour data that paints a pretty picture.

A good analytics consultant should be able to steer your project away from [selection biases](#).

Understand the Right Tools and Their Implementation

Most tools do not process data retrospectively. This means whatever data you collect and however you process it will always have an impact on your insights. We implemented our web analytics while we were still developing our [site](#).

From a little oversight, we failed to filter our internal traffic. To this date, our average session metric is still quite long because on one hackathon we spent 72 hours tweaking code and refreshing pages. Though not as extreme, most of our sessions were usually quite long.

This taught us the importance of implementing tools right from the onset. It also taught us how to segment our dashboards to account for unfortunate extremes. Mistakes and oversights will always happen.

A good analytics consultant brings knowledge on how to minimize them, or minimize their effects when they inevitably happen.

Apply Data Insights and Facilitate Constructive Discussion

Organisations face great challenges in making data organisation-wide resources. The result is analytics projects conducted by "experts" and imposed on the people on the ground. When this happens, projects are met with resistance.

When this happens, analytics projects lose value because insights are under-valued by their key audience. Even worse, the project loses a valuable resource for building an incremental model.

A good analytics consultant understands the barriers to analytics adoption from the onset. He would know the challenges in getting end users to embrace and apply insights from data while giving valuable feedback for growth.

As a result, an analytics consultant can help your organisation break down these barriers. This will get everyone involved to embrace the project.

In addition, by enlightening various users on questions they can expect to answer from using data and analytics, he can help everyone contribute to a robust conversation around the analytics project that facilitates its improvement.

Build an Incremental Model

Analytics is an ongoing process and not a once-off endeavour. A framework should exist to apply feedback from analytics and improve the insights generated from the project. From the onset, you should have growth in mind when planning and implementing.

Every aspect of the project should be chosen to be scalable if need be. This includes tools, data sources, goals, KPIs, etc. It can, however, be tough to imagine how all of this can be a factor in future if you have not walked that path before.

And failing to implement properly can mean going back to the drawing board in future.

This could be costly both in terms of money and insights, not to mention downright annoying. This is where the experience of an analytics consultant comes in. Because they have helped other organisations grow before, they would know how to structure your project for growth as well.

In his intro to using [segment](#) tutorials, [Ruben Ugarte](#) opens with a little story of how originally ignoring this tool came back to bite him six months down the line.

With the lesson he learnt from this, he's in a better position to help his clients avoid this pitfall and many more. This advantage could mean the difference for your business too.

Category

1. Analytics & Data

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