ANALYTICS

Build a better experience with deep insights

HKBU gaining value from data for accurate and meaningful insights

Velocity
Business Solutions
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Qlik

CUSTOMER STORY

"We see Qlik as enabling active intelligence, active insight. It allows us to have data available for everyday decision making, and that's when you can really make an impact."

Dr Alison Lloyd, Associate Vice President, Hong Kong Baptist University
(Institutional Research and Strategic Planning)

Striving to meet Hong Kong's higher education standards

As with many universities across the world, several key factors determine success. For publicly funded Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), the first priority is to support students on their academic journey with a rewarding and positive experience. HKBU also needs to meet high standards set by the government with the aim of improving access to, and the quality of, higher education.

Established in 1956, HKBU now caters to 13,000 local and international students, supported by 3,000 staff. Approximately one-third of these are academic staff, and data is essential in both understanding the learning journey of current students and also providing insights into shaping strategies for future students. As is the case with many higher education institutions, HKBU produces and collects disparate and high volumes of student data, and needed a solution to transform it into useful insights.

"Previously, a lot of data and reporting was distributed across the university, which was not ideal as reporting requirements became more intensive," says Dr Alison Lloyd, Associate Vice President at Hong Kong Baptist University (Institutional Research and Strategic Planning). Adding to the volume challenge, data was also being collected in separate or siloed systems, with each department handling its own reporting. There was, as a result, little inter-departmental coordination.

Solution Overview

Customer Name
Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)

Industry
Public Sector

Geography
Hong Kong

Function
Education

Business Value Driver
Reimagined Processes

Challenges
- Support students on their journey to a successful academic conclusion
- Satisfy the high standards of compliance expected of Hong Kong's registered higher education providers
- Handle multiple internal and external data sources to meet its mission

Solution
Deployed Qlik Sense to seamlessly bring all relevant data together for detailed analysis.

Results
- Disparate data collected on one platform
- Strong academic support with better academic performance analysis
- Increased staff engagement and better academic and business decisions

HKBU set out to make greater use of technology to better manage and understand data, and to deploy it in areas ranging from benchmarking academic standards to mandatory statistical reporting for its funding body. It chose to collaborate with IT consultancy business Velocity Business Solutions, and used Qlik to develop solutions capable of producing meaningful insights.

Siloed data hampers meaningful decisions

HKBU staff needed to access multiple internal and external data streams from disparate sources and systems across the institution. In particular, the university recognized the value of a platform that could pull together data from all areas of the institution to help overcome its challenges.

Gathering multiple sources of data at different times of the year was time-consuming and often resulted in outdated information. Data about application, enrolment, engagement, employment, and student profiles came from diverse departments and was received in different formats, making analysis difficult. Staff also found it challenging to amalgamate the multiple sources to make informed decisions that influence intake, program design, and graduate employability.

"We were given a mandate to propagate more data-driven approaches and mindsets. One of the first steps is making sure we can put data in the hands of people who need it," says Lloyd.

Multiple data sources on a single platform

One priority for HKBU, as stated in its strategic plan, is to deliver the best student experience. Staff would benefit from being able to access data in one place; this would enable them to visualize the learning journey from application to employment, while also enriching their ability to analyze and use data. These are also key factors that the university needs to demonstrate in a quality assurance audit to be carried out by its funding body.

With Qlik Sense, HKBU customized a range of dashboards covering different areas. Some 400 users have access to these dashboards, enabling them to track intake trends, academic performances from previous schools, and chosen career paths. These comparisons were previously unheard of due the time and effort required to collect the necessary information. Crucially, HKBU can now rely on one solution to aggregate various information types onto a single dashboard.

Tracking trends is key for HKBU. Qlik's solutions enable the university to monitor performance and flag up key academic indicators. Added to that is the ability to integrate external sources of data, such as entry scores from Hong Kong's Joint University Programs Admissions Systems, to enable benchmarking that allows the university to compare itself with peer institutions.

"The dashboard is helping to make things very transparent. In the past, you might only have had data for your particular school or program. With the dashboards we wanted to really give people access to the same data, but maybe from another program," says Anson Wun, HKBU Senior Manager (Analytics and Business Intelligence).

"With the technical expertise of Velocity, the team was able to deliver a handful of dashboards in unprecedented time. Velocity's solution consultant also shared valuable insights to best model and visualize our data. We are glad to have them alongside this analytics journey."

Quicker access to data from broader range of sources

Requests for data may previously have taken weeks or months to be fulfilled, if resources were available. But with Qlik, customized requests can be met quickly, ensuring that data is always current. Added to that, the architecture can handle multiple types of information in a single process, expanding the scope of information for the user.

Easy-to-use dashboards have stripped away menial tasks such as leafing through thick paper reports. Qlik allows users to access drop-down functions and set filters to keywords during searches, thereby speeding up results, while visualization features help staff understand student behavior by tracking co-curricular achievements, desired experiences, and internships to better tailor programs.

Qlik's solutions are also being applied in other areas, such as finance, human resources and research grants. As a versatile solution, customized dashboards allow staff to slice and dice data for analysis, a capability that is also proving vital for monitoring expenditure.

"Qlik helps us to explore areas and find interesting patterns or issues that we might have missed otherwise. And it's in those outliers where you see an opportunity for the university to make a difference," says Lloyd.

The keys to success

1 platform to house data from several sources

1 solution to perform multiple functions

"It's given users a lot more information at their fingertips, particularly about what the student experience is really like."

Dr Alison Lloyd, Associate Vice President, Hong Kong Baptist University (Institutional Research and Strategic Planning)

Qlik Q®

About Qlik

Qlik's vision is a data-literate world, where everyone can use data and analytics to improve decision-making and solve their most challenging problems. Our cloud-based Qlik Active Intelligence Platform® delivers end-to-end, real-time data integration and analytics cloud solutions to close the gaps between data, insights and action. By transforming data into Active Intelligence, businesses can drive better decisions, improve revenue and profitability, and optimize customer relationships. Qlik does business in more than 100 countries and serves over 38,000 active customers around the world.

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About Velocity Business Solutions

Velocity Business Solutions is an industry-leading data analytics company focused on transforming data into actionable insights. With vast experience in the education sector, we work with Higher Education institutions in Hong Kong helping them in the process of collecting, analyzing and presenting data in a way that is easy to understand, giving complete visibility into university operations and empowering its institutions to make informed decisions faster.

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