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LINK

A Unique Blend: How Robust, Mature Data Is Transforming the Wine World

QLIK

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I fall in love with wine every day. I love the magic that happens when I drink it, and I love the magic that happens when the people around me drink it. I love the experience and engagement shared by wine consumers and winemakers. Apart from the beauty of the experience, understanding the people, history, and narratives behind the wine itself brings it to life.

I've written about wine for 15 years. This journey has led to some incredible opportunities, including writing a book, becoming a guest commentator on the Emmy-nominated Netflix series Rotten, and teaching at universities and in MBA programs around the world. For the past seven years, I've focused on the business and politics of wine in my column for Forbes.

After digging into the technology and getting to know the innovators in the space, it became clear that data was an underdeveloped, and largely untapped, opportunity in the wine industry. Consumers all around the world constantly share what they think and feel about wine, how they buy it, and where they're drinking it. This results in vast quantities of data, but simply having mountains of data isn't enough.

There wasn't a good way to track that digital trail to meet consumers where they are. I recognized the endless possibilities for that data, and I wanted to help the industry realize them.

Creating a Collaborative Data Ecosystem for the Wine World

Four years ago, I decided to fill our industry's data gap and co-founded [Enolytics](#). We're a data visualization and aggregation company that works collaboratively with our wine business clients and big data partners to provide clear insights and intelligence about wine consumers, market fluctuations, the demands of emerging channels like e-commerce, and the predictive analytics that help illuminate the path forward. Enolytics works with companies to visualize and understand the significant amounts of data at their disposal. We help identify their pain points and show them how data can help their business.

Designing a collaborative #data ecosystem is the foundation to unlocking key industry insights.

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One of the first challenges was to determine who holds the data, and who would be willing to partner with us. In other words, we had to figure out how to create a collaborative data ecosystem. Creative and effective collaboration has been a fundamental part of Enolytics' philosophy since the beginning. We wanted to work with the people who have the data, and also the people who can benefit from it.

Persuading wine industry professionals that data is beneficial can be a challenge. There's often a fear factor around data, partly due to privacy and security issues. Wine people can also be shy about their lack of knowledge and bandwidth to learn more.

But there's another element that prevents people from embracing data as well. Loving wine can have a lot to do with loving the wine lifestyle. There's a romanticized element of beautiful people doing amazing, creative things in fabulous locations around the world. Where does data fit into that ethos? At first glance, it doesn't — so we needed to prove data's value in other ways, such as its business impacts.

Combining Data Analytics and Wine Connoisseurs

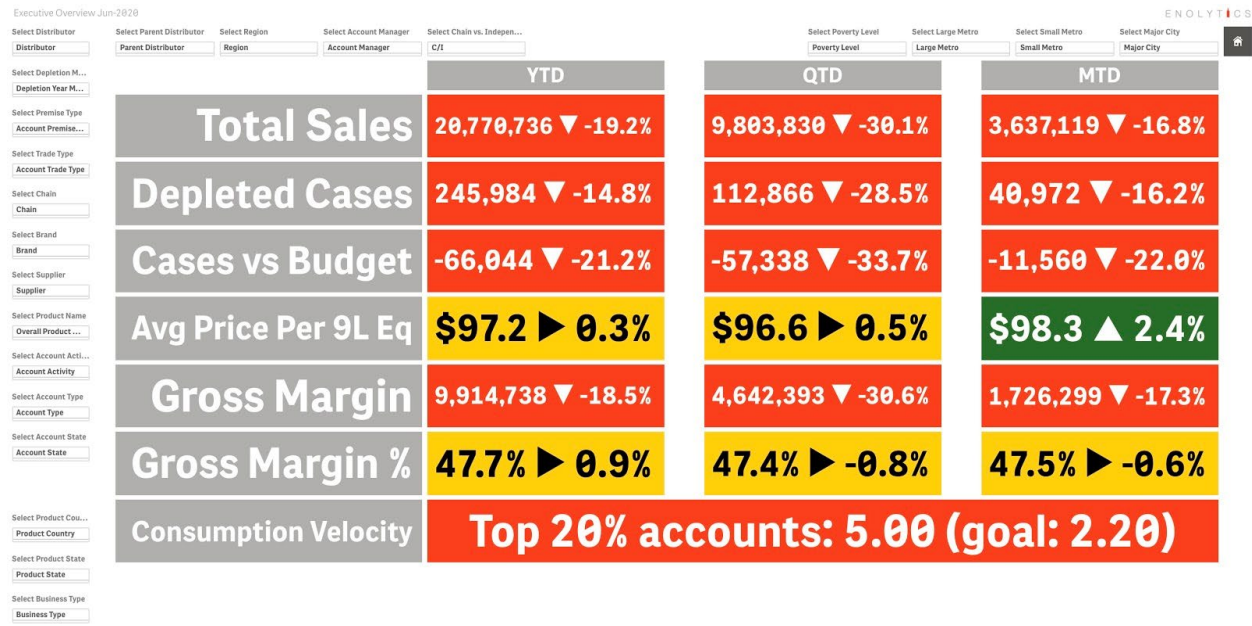
From the beginning, my co-founder and I believed that [Qlik](#) would be an important part of Enolytics, but we needed more information about it. We showed up at a local [Qlik](#) user group meetup in Atlanta and spoke with other attendees, including Qlik experts and Luminaries. The experience was amazing. We left more excited than we were before about the potential to apply the bandwidth of Qlik as a tool to an unexpected industry like wine and, eventually, other categories in the beverage alcohol space, such as beer and spirits.

We also explored different analytics platforms, such as Looker and Google Data Studio. For some everyday tasks, these options work well. In terms of robustness, ease of use, and trust in a platform, however, Qlik was our top choice, and we made the plunge.

We immediately started addressing one of the industry's largest pain points: running reports. Salespeople spend an inordinate amount of time on these, which takes away from their work in the field, speaking and engaging directly with customers. We wanted to make it easier for them to see critical information, and so we used Qlik Sense to develop scorecards.

We helped clients identify their most important daily key performance indicators (KPIs). From there, we created a color-coded KPI dashboard that makes it easy for users — from sales managers to

executives — to visualize the health of those KPIs. If they see green, everything's in good shape; yellow, something needs attention; and red, the item(s) should be top priority.



Everyone can start their day by viewing this scorecard, which auto-updates daily. It's a very responsive use of the app, gives salespeople back their time, and allows for quick prioritization.

Harvesting the Benefits of Data Partnerships

Another use case comes from [Frescobaldi](#), a family-owned wine legacy based in Tuscany, who was interested in harnessing consumer data.

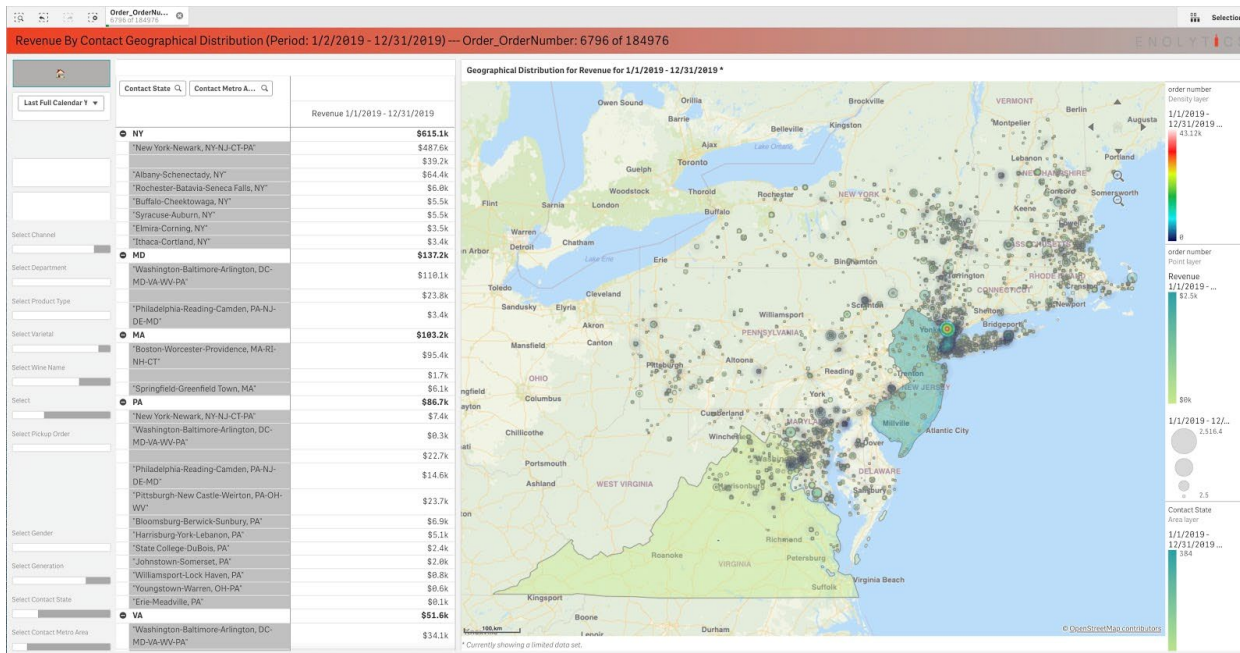
When we initially launched Enolytics, we secured a tremendous partnership with Vivino, an online wine marketplace and wine app with about 42 million downloads around the world. We'd write a specific client query, and Vivino would execute on the query. We then used Qlik to visualize the results — in this case, consumer tasting notes.

We wanted to know the words that consumers most frequently use to describe different wines within the category that Frescobaldi indicated. The Frescobaldi team was fascinated to see how the language of consumers changed depending on geographic location. The way that a consumer in Boston, for example, describes their wine is not the same as a consumer in Los Angeles or in Miami.

That natural language processing project is now the subject of a Harvard Business School analytics case study. It's being taught in their business analytics class, which says a lot about our partners, the quality of the data itself, and the impact that data analytics is having on the current and next generation of business leaders.

We were also able to create visually engaging heat maps using [GeoAnalytics](#), and further segmented the data by target market. By doing this, our client could connect with the consumers where they were physically located since their feedback is geotagged.

This was a lightbulb moment for our client. A brand obviously knows the locations of restaurants and retailers who carry their products, but they have almost no visibility into where the individual consumers are located. Frescobaldi had a B2B map before, and Qlik helped create a B2C map.



New World, New Use Cases

These geographic insights have become particularly useful in the wake of COVID-19. Restaurants and wineries have had to close their doors to the public, either temporarily or permanently. The atmosphere of enjoying a glass of wine has shifted — literally and figuratively — closer to home.

Because of this, wineries want to know where to focus their efforts. Wine clubs have become increasingly important to winemakers. By selling direct to consumers through their clubs, winemakers want to understand:

- The factors that contribute to their most successful marketing campaigns, in order to help them see why, exactly, the campaign was successful
- How to connect high-value buyers with their most effective offers or strategies
- Who and what are their biggest revenue generators, so that they know where to prioritize their efforts
- How to further segment their audiences

If you're targeting a 30-something woman in Brooklyn who loves red blends, you have to speak to her differently than the way you speak to a 60-something retiree in Dallas, who just recently discovered they like Riesling. They are completely different people, and you need to talk to them in completely different ways. Being able to target and segment with such granularity is incredibly valuable.

The right data helps you listen to your customers, so you can do a better job communicating with them.

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Since wine takes five to seven years to mature from a vine in the ground to a viable wine on the table, it's difficult for winemakers to shift their agricultural production midstream to match passing trends of what consumers seem to want. Instead, they have to find a way to talk about what they're making in a way that appeals to more people. Data can help ensure those two pieces stay aligned throughout the

maturity process.

When we get better at listening to our customers, we can better communicate with them and discover the elements of their wine experience that matter most to them. Data helps the wine industry get closer to the end consumer, and helps consumers get closer to the wine.

Becoming a Data Sommelier Through Education

A huge part of success with collaboration comes from recognizing the skills that your partners bring to the table, and allowing them to shine.

Our CTO and his team come from a healthcare background and have limited knowledge of the wine industry, but they have finely tuned antennae to the operations and the financial components of how a business runs. Not only do they know how to analyze data, but they have a comprehensive understanding of budgets, supply chain, and consumption velocity, among other things.

Our data team appreciates how information can be layered and aggregated to give a more comprehensive picture of an individual business. Together with the knowledge of the wine itself, we all have access to something much more valuable than anything that our clients have had before. Data can be intimidating. So can wine. But blending the two can transform an industry.

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Enolytics is currently building a grassroots initiative — a wine data “support group” that facilitates communication, collaboration, and information sharing within the wine data community. Wine people know and love wine, and data people know and love data. The key is to get past the intimidation factor of not knowing enough about the other side.

We’re actively engaging volunteers to participate, organize, and share their perspectives as part of this initiative. We built a mindmap of the responses from a recent survey asking about their concerns and desires, and will use that as a starting point. The more voices that are involved, the better and more useful the group will be.

Qlik has also connected me to its academic program, which I have made available to my MBA students around the world. Students can become Qlik certified at no charge. That is a tremendous opportunity, especially knowing the need for data experts in the wine, spirits, and beer space. If you step into the wine world with data expertise, you're already far ahead of the game in terms of skills and value to your employer.

Sipping on Analytics

Qlik is a powerful tool for us. Our clients can see everything in one place, and it reduces the need for difficult-to-read spreadsheets of hundreds of thousands of lines of raw data. Qlik’s visualization and ability to interact with data dynamically makes it easy to get business insights and provide direction for next steps.

Qlik has also been instrumental to my breaking into the wine world as a tech entrepreneur. When you have a tool that is as user-friendly as Qlik, there’s no need for wine people to be intimidated by data. Creating an open, supportive space for wine people and data analysts to collaborate is the next step in helping wine businesses understand their consumers better. I’m proud that Enolytics is able to

facilitate these partnerships.

You don't have to know wine to love wine. Wine specialists can go on for hours about the proper glassware, optimal temperature, and unique tasting notes of certain wines. But often, the best wine is the one that's already in your glass. And, increasingly, its journey there is just as much about data as the grapes themselves.

Cathy Huyghe

Co-Founder at Enolytics

In addition to co-founding Enolytics, Cathy is the founder of 365daysofwine.com and Red White Boston. She is the author of the award-winning book "Hungry for Wine: Seeing the World through the Lens of a Wine Glass," and her writing has appeared in print and online for both general-interest and wine industry publications. Her non-profit involvement includes working with the Women's Solidarity Society at the new National Center for Civil & Human Rights, the Food Well Alliance, Girls on the Run, and the Neighborhood Justice Center.