Dark Data Unearthed to Shape Direction and ROI of Efforts

SQA Group helps national arts organization unlock actionable insights to shape data-driven strategy

CHALLENGE

In response to company growth blockers — specifically decreased employee engagement, slowed customer acquisition cycles, and mounting competitor pressure — a globally recognized brand that drives experiential events was on a mission-critical journey to uncover data-backed strategies aimed at culture building, rev-impacting growth strategies, and strengthened diversity, equity and inclusion.

The investments the firm had made in technology and employee survey methodologies generated initial sets of data, but reporting was static and the data was surface, and lacked actionable insights. What's more, the Executive Leadership team needed answers to questions such as: What is current employee sentiment? Where is immediate opportunity for growth? Where are the risks? How do we gain predictive capabilities? How do measure impact/ROI on cultural changes and investments?

> *"SQA Group has given me the tools I need to have the uncomfortable conversations with my Executive Leadership Team about where we are today and what we need to think about moving forward."*
>
> *-Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*

The executive team believed that a greater investment in data maturity and predictive analytics would be key in shaping future decisions, but lacked the internal expertise and time to drive forward on its own. What's more, they needed to work with data experts who not only possessed data mastery, but could analyze raw data through the lens of shaping business strategy around culture, employee experience, and diversity, equity and inclusion.

SOLUTION

SQA Group deployed its Data and Innovation team — hyperspecialized in data science, advanced analytics, and innovative business strategy — to power the firm's commitment to becoming data driven. The engagement centered around SQA Group unearthing "dark data" insights from the company's existing data, identifying new actions and behaviors to move the needle, and correlating the impact of those actions to financial, efficiency, and morale gains.

In just 60-days, and providing weekly sprint-like actionable intel for stakeholders to build momentum, SQA Group partnered to:

- Analyze both structured (data living in existing systems) and unstructured data (social media posts, sentiment analysis, anecdotal stories, etc.) that could not previously be correlated

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- Unearth insights and data stories that explain why certain things are happening today, and predict what might happen next, along with the ripple effect current state is having org-wide
- Create a custom roadmap of new data-driven actions and behaviors cross-functional teams should take to drive swift impact against target goals and business objectives
- Conduct a risk analysis to understand the cost to the business of not moving forward with these data-backed recommendations, as well as the ROI impact of driving execution swiftly
- Plot roadmap items against a prioritized timeline that accounts for maximum ROI realization

> *"The depth of data analysis, storytelling and ROI-aligned strategies is comprehensive, enlightening, and innovative for our organization."*

IMPACT

SQA Group delivered a custom-built Data-Backed Framework, with 7-figure ROI value, that leveraged newly elevated insights to identify risk, set direction, and prioritize new actions against their ability to drive financial health and growth. Chief findings included:

- **Modernize existing data collection process** for collecting employee and customer sentiment as current methodologies were limited, confined, and one-dimensional
- Introduce an **always-on approach to data** collection through employee pulse surveys, listening sessions, Ask Me Anything workshops, and org-wide data maturity efforts
- Spark a culture of **innovation acceleration**, with analysis revealing a gap between ideas conceived versus ideas brought to execution resulting in opportunity loss for the firm
- Amplify the firm's Culture & Values internally and through public channels (e.g. website, social media) to increase **speed to talent, customer and partner acquisition**
- Redesign the **performance review process** by introducing bi-directional review cycles that give employees the chance to share what they need from their manager

In examining ROI potential of all recommendations, SQA Group connected each prioritized action to its ability to **make or save the business money**.

For example, prioritizing speed to act on even one employee idea via innovation acceleration could lead to revenue potential being boosted 15%. By unlocking hidden insights about where employees wish the firm would do better, the organization could save 2X each employee's salary, in addition to vacancy costs. In leading with values messaging, the firm could drive a 60% revenue increase, with 85% of customers considering authenticity when choosing a brand.

Roadmap items and risk mitigation strategies uncovered multi-million dollar ROI potential that could be realized by executing data-backed prioritized actions. Enabling the firm to not only unlock the impact of advanced data analysis, but to align their teams to actions and behaviors that would most create wins, momentum, and buy-in for the power of data-powered strategies.

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