ANALYTICS

A game-changing approach to analytics

Ice hockey pioneers use Qlik Cloud to
build a team of winners

STRETCH ON SENSE

Qlik

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Andreas Hadelöv, Sports Analyst, Malmö Redhawks

A reputation for innovation

Sports scientists often talk about marginal gains – the theory that making small changes in numerous different areas is the key to improving overall performance. And as the tracking and monitoring of sports performance becomes increasingly detailed and granular, the number of metrics being produced is growing at unprecedented rates.

Malmö Redhawks is a Swedish ice hockey team with a history that dates back to 1947, most of which has been spent in Sweden's top league, currently known as the Swedish Hockey League (SHL). The Redhawks won the Swedish national championship in 1992 and 1994, and the European championship in 1993.

It's also a team with a reputation for innovation both on and off the ice, with a strong focus on training techniques and player welfare as well as strong performances during games.

"We aim to be pioneers on the physical side of the game," says Andreas Hadelöv, Sports Analyst at Malmö Redhawks. "And when the league introduced a really good system for analyzing games from a statistical viewpoint, we immediately saw the value of making the best possible use of the quality data we were receiving."

Focusing on the small details

Training techniques and game analysis have evolved significantly in recent years. Processes that once depended on video analysis and a basic set of statistics have become vastly more sophisticated and wide-ranging, involving a series of specialist systems that focus on specific areas.

Solution Overview

Customer Name
Malmö Redhawks

Industry
Retail and Services

Geography
Sweden

Function
IT

Business Value Driver
Reimagined Processes

Challenges
- Growing volumes of data were becoming difficult to manage and process
- Opportunities to optimize team performance were being missed
- Key data was scattered across multiple sources and systems

Solution
Malmö Redhawks uses Hat-TriQ, based on Qlik Cloud, to combine, analyze and present data and insights generated from multiple parts of its operations.

Results
- High-quality analytics boost team performance and player wellbeing
- Ease of use ensures strong user adoption and trust
- Single point of reference maximizes access to critical data

The team's Catapult system, for example, looks at the intensity of training sessions, Sportlogiq analyzes gameplay, while Oura Ring fitness trackers measure key variables such as heart rates, stress levels, sleep patterns and other medical indicators.

While all these systems deliver highly useful information, staff at Malmö Redhawks realized that the sheer volume of data being produced by these and other sources meant that much of it was underused. Compounding the issue was the fact that the data was distributed among multiple different systems, making the process of building a coherent overview highly complex.

"It's not cost-effective for a team like ours to have that many people looking into all those small details," explains Hadelöv. "When you get so much data, you have to filter it."

It was an area where Malmö Redhawks needed help; fortunately, this was at hand from a long-standing fan.

A powerful platform

Martin Sahlin, founder of Stockholm-based sports analytics specialist Stretch On Sense, is as passionate about data as he is about ice hockey.

He and Hadelöv collaborated to develop the Hat-TriQ platform, so named because it focuses on three key areas – how players practice, how players play and how players feel – covering a team's performance and its players' physical and mental health.

"Hat-TriQ is different from other sports analytics solutions because it brings all the data together from all systems," Sahlin says. "You don't have to go to different sources to analyze all the different kinds of data you're interested in looking at."

The power behind Hat-TriQ is data analytics platform Qlik Cloud, which is integral to the solution's ability to acquire, consolidate and analyze data from multiple different sources, cross-reference it where appropriate and then present it in a compelling and effective format.

"Qlik Cloud is the best and most powerful business intelligence solution in the world," notes Sahlin. "It's easy to use for users, it's easy to develop on and it's a very open system that allows us to integrate all the different data source types that a sports team might have."

Leading the way in elite hockey

Hat-TriQ now gives Malmö Redhawks a single, central point of reference to guide the team, its coaches and individual players through critical areas such as gameplay, training and personal wellbeing.

And once again, Malmö Redhawks led the way, becoming the first elite hockey team to put Hat-TriQ into full effect.

Malmö Redhawks staff now benefit from accurate and informed decision-making based on high-quality game and performance analytics. Enabled by Qlik, Hat-TriQ's ease of use means user adoption is impressive and confidence in the data and analytics produced is high.

"Hat-TriQ's trend analysis highlights the importance of sports analytics and bottom-line numbers that affect results," says Sahlin. "It combines statistics from the last game, the insights gained and lessons learned to present metrics and key focus areas that can be used in briefings to prepare for the next game and develop team planning and strategy."

Hadelöv also notes that Hat-TriQ has played an important role in reducing injuries and ensuring that players are in the best possible physical and mental shape for the challenges that lie ahead.

"The performance team is using the data to see if any players are on the verge of getting an injury, taking on too much load or training too intensively in any given area," he explains. "That's the biggest benefit, to get fresh players to every practice and every game, and even out the load across the whole team."

Better questions, better answers

While Hat-TriQ and Qlik can help to deliver tactical advice on upcoming games, and even provide analysis on future opponents and their strengths and weaknesses, the platform also has longer-term applications.

"The coaching staff will look to Hat-TriQ to help with decisions from game to game and day to day, but this is also a future-facing project," says Freddie Sjögren, Head of Performance at Malmö Redhawks. "Our goal with Hat-TriQ is to be able to ask better questions, get better answers and use those to make the next questions even better."

Hadelöv also sees the value in taking the longer-term view of the benefits that Hat-TriQ can bring to Malmö Redhawks.

"In a single game you can play badly on a statistical level and still win, and vice versa," he explains. "But if you look at it over time, the data never lies and you become much more aware of the little changes that happen gradually. That's where Qlik and Hat-TriQ deliver the advantages that lead to winning the game."

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Martin Sahlin, Founder and CTO, Stretch On Sense

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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. A private company, Qlik offers real-time data integration and analytics solutions, powered by Qlik Cloud, 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 serves more than 38,000 active customers in over 100 countries.

qlik.com

STRETCH ON SENSE

About Stretch On Sense

With Stretch On Sense's products, elite sports clubs efficiently analyze their players' wellbeing and performance with a detailed, simplified, easy-to-understand cloud-based tool. In addition, the solution ensures that all players, coaches GMs and other stakeholders work towards the same goal and are involved in discussion and decisions that lead to better results.

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