ANALYTICS

Data achieves debt resolution success

Consumer loan experts use Qlik to broaden customer insights and build analytics capabilities

Qlik **Q**

NATIONAL CREDIT
ADJUSTERS

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Completing the obligation

Most consumer loans follow a straightforward and problem-free trajectory: money is lent and repayments are made until the debt is cleared. From car sales to financial services and banking, it's a basic service without which many industries and consumers would struggle.

Sometimes, however, the process is less smooth. Non-performing loans and distressed accounts put strains on lenders' cashflows, balance sheets and staff. At best, this is inconvenient; at worst, it can threaten a lender's very existence. It's also the primary area of expertise for National Credit Adjusters (NCA).

Now operational for over two decades and active across the US and in Jamaica, NCA isn't a standard debt collector. Rather than acting on behalf of other lenders, NCA acquires debt portfolios and in the large majority, takes full ownership of them, including responsibility for getting them repaid.

"These are debts that have been charged off by the originator. We purchase them, bring them into the company and do what we can to aid the consumer in recovering the debt that is still owed legally," explains Jack Mahoney, Analytics Director at NCA. "That way, we get them back on track to getting the payments made and completing their obligation."

Diligence through analysis

NCA's business model requires compliance, integrity and accountability. It's also a model that will continue to remain successful by applying the highest standards of diligence across the entire process. From evaluating available portfolios of debt and assessing fair prices for them, to identifying the best strategies to maximize returns on these investments, NCA's ongoing growth and success relies on the accuracy and applicability of its analytics.

Solution Overview

Customer Name
National Credit Adjusters (NCA)

Industry
Financial Services

Geography
USA

Function
Finance, HR, Marketing

Business Value Driver
Customer Intelligence, New Business Opportunities, Reimagined Processes

Challenges
- Give staff more effective resources to grow repayments
- Derive more insightful analysis from multiple data sources
- Enable quicker and more efficient processing on a larger scale

Solution
NCA's analytics journey with Qlik began with QlikView and has evolved to incorporate Qlik Sense SaaS as part of Qlik Cloud and experiments with Qlik AutoML.

Results
- Staff now have near real-time access to major performance indicators
- NCA can more effectively incorporate external data sources to assist agents
- Precise and granular analysis informs key purchases and critical decisions

"Every portfolio is different. We have to take in the information and use our analytical tools and knowledge to provide a valuation to the purchasing team. We have to show why we believe we can purchase at a given price and collect a predicted amount," says Mahoney. "It allows us to show that value proposition within the portfolio, and analytics is key to that process."

This, however, is just the start. Once a portfolio is purchased, NCA consults external data sources to build a more complete picture of individual accounts and give debt collection agents all the necessary available information to enable contact with payers. The performance of the agents is also tracked and analyzed to maximize their effectiveness and success rates.

Information at the fingertips

In the early years of the business, both the availability of this data and the tools to analyze it effectively were limited. However, Mahoney describes a pivotal decision made by NCA in 2009.

"In retrospect, we weren't using sufficient data to drive our decisions at that point. There was a lot of gut feel, and what data we were using was handled by standard office applications," he recalls. "We brought QlikView on board to start pulling in our data and getting information to the fingertips of those who really need it."

Qlik quickly became an important part of NCA's operations, delivering key metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) to managers and staff throughout the business. An essential part of its success was the ability to take data generated by NCA's front-end collection software and analyze and present it through a single point of access.

"Qlik really came into play here. It made a big difference in pulling data from everywhere – from SQL servers to standard spreadsheets – into a central location," says Mahoney. "We started with one basic application that delivered all the metrics that we wanted, and that's only grown over time as we've gotten better and better with it."

Making days – and months – better

Qlik now delivers depths of analysis and levels of granularity that weren't previously available to NCA. For its part, NCA is capitalizing on the gains this delivers and ensuring that front-line staff receive all the resources and support needed to maximize returns.

"Spreadsheets can only do so much when delivering insights on a large scale," says Mahoney. "Qlik can pull in so much data and get through it so quickly. We just wouldn't have the insights we have today without it."

With QlikView established within NCA for over a decade, transitioning to Qlik Sense SaaS as part of Qlik Cloud was a logical step forward. This is an ongoing process and the two platforms are both highly active at NCA, but Mahoney is keen for Qlik Sense SaaS to take on more of the workload. He also describes how long-standing QlikView users are "blown away" by the capabilities offered by Qlik Sense SaaS.

"Our licensing with Qlik Sense SaaS allows us to get information into more hands than we could previously, all the way down to our account managers," he explains. "Through Qlik Sense SaaS, for example, we're able to deliver data to the first-line people on the phone, so they can see near real-time metrics throughout the day. They can then understand where to make adjustments and tweaks to make their day – and ultimately their month – better."

'A fantastic tool'

Such is Qlik's rising influence, over 150 of NCA's 250 staff are now active and regular users of at least one Qlik application. It is also a presence that is driving NCA's operations to new levels of efficiency: using Qlik, NCA can build more comprehensive profiles of customers and augment its internal resources with external data sourced from credit bureaus, skip-tracing services and basic IRS information.
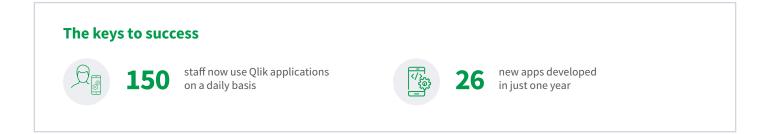
"We get that aggregate value based on what a consumer's credit profile and history looks like," Mahoney notes. "It's super helpful."

The next stage of NCA's journey with Qlik is to incorporate Qlik AutoML into day-to-day operations. Mahoney and his team have been exploring Qlik AutoML's potential and are excited by what it has to offer.

"We can take the data we already have stored in Qlik, feed it into AutoML and start running experiments to see what new insights we can derive," he explains. "We're getting close to putting a 'payer prediction' facility into production, which will allow us to identify customers with a higher probability of making payments so we can target our efforts more precisely."

It's a facility that will add yet more value to NCA's growing portfolio of capabilities developed through Qlik. The number had already grown from a single initial app to a core of around 18, but the introduction of Qlik Sense SaaS saw another 26 developed in just one year by NCA's small but highly effective in-house team. The end result is that Qlik is now an integral and highly valued part of NCA's operations.

"We've been with Qlik for so long we can't imagine life without it," concludes Mahoney. "We have a universe where we use Qlik products on a daily basis. It's a fantastic tool and we love using it."

The keys to success

150 staff now use Qlik applications on a daily basis

26 new apps developed in just one year

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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.

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