**Ad Hoc Reporting & Analysis**

Data is important for every business because of its role in business decision-making, and its ability to help an organization stay competitive, foster collaboration, empower its staff, and save time and money. For a business to achieve its goals, the data it collects must be easily accessible, accurate and up-to-date. This is where ad hoc reporting & analysis comes in.

Ad hoc reporting is a business intelligence process used to quickly create reports on an as-needed basis (Morris). This differs from canned reports – static reports that are meant to satisfy recurring business questions or interests - in that specific business questions can be answered quickly when needed. This type of reporting enables all employees regardless of technical expertise to be able to access the data they need, and allow the data professionals to stay connected to their day-to-day work. Ad hoc reporting also fosters collaboration with the ability to share reports easily with coworkers or stakeholders as needed.

Ad hoc analysis is similar to ad hoc reporting but allows businesses to extract deeper insights into the data that’s been reported. So, this doesn’t just answer what happened, but why. Similarly, ad hoc analysis can be used by anyone in an organization to gain specific knowledge and to shed light on any business questions that need answering. This reduces IT and data analyst workloads and will give provide more information than static reports will.

Fictional Example

Lateesha, using an ad hoc reporting tool, notices that Twitch brought in much less money from subscriptions in the months of December, April and July. Trying to understand this, she alters to report to show the data for the previous five years. It’s shocking but the last five years show the same trend of reduced subs during those months. She prepares a dashboard of visuals to present to the stakeholders and eventually the department during its quarterly department meeting. With this information, she assumes that since there are major holidays during these months (Christmas, Easter, and Independence Day), that this must be the result of this and may even result in reduced traffic.

Lateesha then uses an ad hoc analysis tool with the hopes of gaining deeper insights into the data she found. The results of that inquiry show that during December, April and July, the top streamers across 12 different video games all take a vacation for the three big holidays. She also sees that the traffic twitch generates remain about the same during those months. That begs the question, why would subscriptions lower during those months if the traffic is about the same? The analysis shows that the viewers amongst the 12 games are evenly distributed amongst the second-tier streamers while the top performers are gone but are reluctant to subscribe since the holidays are an expensive time of the year.

Armed with this new knowledge, when presenting this information to the company’s stakeholders, it’s suggested that there be a discount during those months. Also, since Twitch is already partnered with Amazon, it makes sense to allow Prime users to link their accounts to Twitch to subscribe to streamers as an added bonus, which should increase revenue for both companies. A unanimous decision was made to reduce the price of subs to 50% during those months and Amazon agreed with the plan to introduce a new feature called Twitch Prime.

SOURCES

* https://www.netsuite.com/portal/resource/articles/data-warehouse/ad-hoc-reporting.shtml